

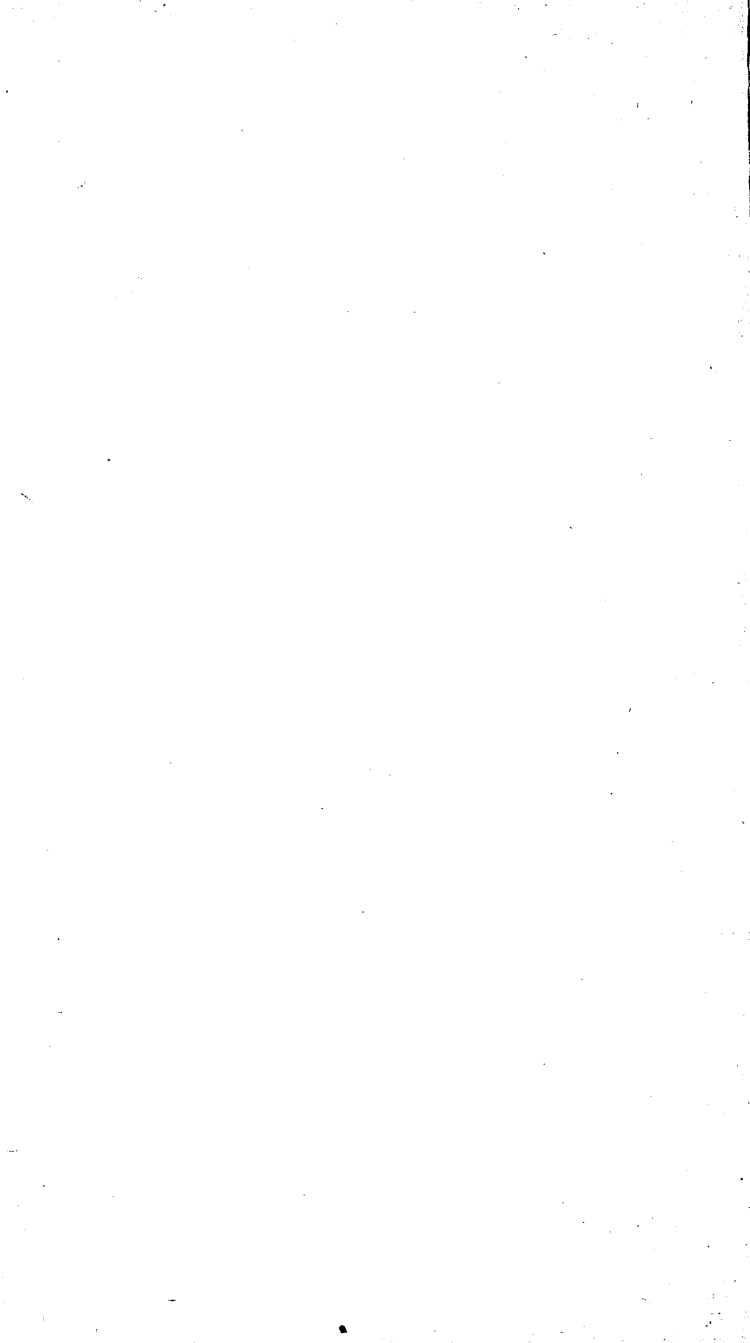
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# TREASURE THOUGHTS

FROM THE WRITINGS OF

FREDERIC W. FARRAR

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

ROSE PORTER

BOSTON  
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY  
FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

TO THE  
GENERAL MANAGER  
OF THE  
PACIFIC COAST

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## INTRODUCTION.

THEY tell me the old-time custom of linking kindly words with more formal terms of introduction has well-nigh passed out of usage.

Be this as it may, certain it is, no words of approval are needed in bidding this little book "God speed." For the name — Frederic W. Farrar — which crowns its title page, will prove a potent entrance plea, claiming interest from readers all our broad land over, so well are Canon Farrar's writings known and prized. Doubly so since the hour when the heart of this English Archdeacon met the heart of the American people in responsive sympathy, as it did, when in Westminster's ancient Abbey, standing within the shadow of the tombs of England's illustrious dead, he uttered that eloquent eulogy on our nation's hero — Grant. A tribute which spanned the wide Atlantic like the warm hand-clasp of a brother.

Truly then, Canon Farrar is no stranger needing introduction. These, his treasure thoughts, are gathered not from an unknown soil, but from the heart and mind of a friend. Yes—even more than a friend, for it is written — “All ye are brethren. One is your Master, even Christ.”

ROSE PORTER.

## FREDERIC W. FARRAR.

**Y**EARS—that count full fifty-four now—have glided away since God sent from Heaven to earth a soul. In far distant India a child was born—a new life began, freighted, as life ever is, with infinite possibilities. And that child was Frederic William Farrar, the author of the “Treasure Thoughts” contained in this volume.

His father was an earnest English churchman, who held, that year 1831, a position as chaplain in the British Army stationed at Bombay, Hindustan.

What influences moulded the character of the growing boy we have no means of knowing, neither can we tell how far the unconscious impress of Nature’s affluence, in that tropical land of his birth, helped to develop his poetic temperament, and supplied the wealth of poetical beauty that marks his spoken and written words with an imagery so vivid it well nigh holds spell-bound listener and reader.

Enough for us to know as the years sped by the lad’s mind and soul unfolded and developed a rare spirit of aspiration after “high thinking” that was interblended with steadfast purpose-full action. And as youth passed into manhood this harmony of *doing* as well as *aspiring* has given Frederic Farrar his power of extended influence, infusing even a magnetic charm into formal

printed words, making them glow and throb with pulse-beats warm from a heart that loves humanity, and a mind that ponders noble thoughts and emulates noble deeds.

“Read great books, enrich your minds with noble sentiments,” thus he bids us, adding, “Nothing profound has ever been thought, nothing enchanting ever imagined, nothing noble ever uttered, nothing saintly or heroic ever done, which is not, or may not be ours, in that to all of us alike God speaks, in that for all of us alike Christ died.”

Sentiments these, which are the key-note of the man’s life—“to all alike God speaks—for all alike Christ died.”

Catholicity of spirit—yes—it is the golden thread that runs like a sunbeam through all his works.

Works that are rich in their rhythmical flow of language, grace of rounded periods, purity, and an easy sweep of fancy that clothes prose in poetry, painting word-pictures with an artist’s pen. And in all this, and hence their power to influence, there is no lack of strength, for the Canon is an athlete in thought, a master in earnest mental work.

The amount he has accomplished testifies to this continual will-power, applied to literary labor, as well as to the wide out-reaching of a scholar’s mind, eager in its search after “light, more light.”

The range of subjects which his mind grasps, too, is indicated by the subjoined list of his published writings, all of which have contributed, some one, some many thoughts for this volume of selections.

But we must not tarry over these preface pages, save to note the rapid progress that has led from the old Fort in Bombay, to graduation at Cambridge University, and on, and still on from honor to honor till now, when, —as the wise men tell us—the years will not count many before earthly honors culminate in the crowning reward “a Bishop’s robes, and admission into the House of Lords.”

A history stamped all onward, hence upward—tell me, is the reason for this, because the man’s final goal knows no limit of earth-bound honors, earth-encompassed powers, but reaches on to the “from height to height” of immortal progress?—Tell me, has he attained “to dignity and renown” without becoming a factionist because clearer than any earth-kindled light, heaven’s illumining shines in his soul?—And is this why, wherever his books are read they find a welcome, whatever the reader’s creed, holding as they do a word for each, “in that to all alike God speaks, for all alike Christ died,” to quote once more his favorite maxim?

Is this why he is recognized not only in England, but on this side the water too, as a leader in theological thought who is “the exponent of a quality which literary criticism would call justness of spirit, which ecclesiastical criticism would call catholicity, and which political criticism would call cosmopolitanism?”

Yet, spite all this, there are those who, while they admire the Archdeacon’s writings, gravely fear their tendency when they deal with the “Future Life”—their fear being—lest he opens Heaven’s gate too wide, and holds it open too long. In fairness to all, and that the

Canon's belief regarding this matter may be fully understood, I copy by his kind permission, granted with a smile, the statement of his views as recorded in the creed contained in the last pages of the volume *Mercy and Judgment*, wherein he writes:

"I believe that on the subject of man's future it has been God's will to leave us uninstructed in details, and that He has vouchsafed to us only so much light as may serve to guide our lives. I believe in God the Father, the Creator; in God the Son, the Redeemer; in God the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

"I believe that God is Love. I believe that God willeth all men to be saved.

"I believe that God has given to all men the gift of immortality, and that the gifts of God are without repentance.

"I believe that every man shall stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ, and shall be judged according to his deeds.

"I believe that He who shall be our Judge is He who died for the sins of the whole world.

"I believe that 'if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins.'

"I believe in the forgiveness of sins. I believe that all who are saved are saved only by grace through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God.

"I believe that every penitent and pardoned soul will pass from this life into a condition of hope, blessedness and peace.

"I believe that man's destiny stops not at the grave,

and that many who knew not Christ here will know Him there.

"I believe that 'in the depths of the Divine compassion there may be opportunity to win faith in the future state.'

"I believe that hereafter—whether by means of the 'almost-sacrament of death' or in other ways unknown to us—God's mercy may reach many who, to all earthly appearance, might seem to us to die in a lost and unregenerate state.

"I believe that as unrepented sin is punished here, so also it is punished beyond the grave.

"I believe that the punishment is effected, not by arbitrary inflictions, but by natural and inevitable consequences, and therefore that the expressions which have been interpreted to mean physical and material agonies by worm and flame are metaphors for a state of remorse and alienation from God.

"I see reasons to hope that these agonies may be so tempered by the mercy of God that the soul may hereafter find some measure of peace and patience, even if it be not admitted into His vision and His Sabbath.

"I believe that among the punishments of the world to come there are 'few stripes' as well as 'many stripes,' and I do not see how any fair interpretation of the metaphor, 'few stripes,' can be made to involve the conception of endlessness for all who incur future retribution.

"I believe that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, and I see reasons to hope that since the Gospel was thus once preached 'to them that were dead'

the offers of God's mercy may in some form be extended to the soul, even after death.

"I believe that there is an Intermediate State of the soul, and that the great separation of souls into two classes will not take place until the final judgment.

"I believe that we are permitted to hope that, whether by a process of discipline, or enlightenment, or purification, or punishment, or by the special mercy of God in Christ, or in consequence of prayer, the state of many souls may be one of progress and diminishing sorrow, and of advancing happiness in the Intermediate State.

"I believe that there will be degrees of blessedness and degrees of punishment or deprivation, and I see reasons to hope that there may be gradual mitigations of penal doom to all souls that accept the Will of God respecting them.

"I believe, as Christ has said, that 'all manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men, and their blasphemies, however greatly they shall blaspheme,' and that as there is but one sin of which He said that it should be forgiven neither in this æon nor in the next, there must be some sins which will be forgiven in the next as well as in this.

"I believe that without holiness no man can see the Lord, and that no sinner can be pardoned or accepted till he has repented, and till his free will is in unison with the Will of God; and I cannot tell whether some souls may not resist God for ever, and therefore may not be for ever shut out from His presence.

"And I believe that to be without God is 'hell;' and that in this sense there is a hell beyond the grave; and



that for any soul to fall even for a time into this condition, though it be through its own hardened impenitence and resistance of God's grace, is a very awful and terrible prospect; and that in this sense there may be for some souls an endless hell. But I see reason to hope that through God's mercy, and through the merits of Christ's sacrifice, the great majority of mankind may be delivered from this awful doom. For, according to the Scriptures, though I know not what its nature will be or how it will be effected,

"I believe in the restitution of all things; and I believe in the coming of that time when, — though in what sense I cannot pretend to explain or to fathom —

*God will be All in All."*

Titles of the volumes consulted in preparing these selections from Canon Farrar's writings are: *Families of Speech, Language and Languages, The Witness of History to Christ, Eternal Hope, Mercy and Judgment, The Fall of Man and other Sermons, Seekers after God, The Silence and Voices of God, In the Days of Thy Youth, Saintly Workers, Ephphatha; or, the Amelioration of the World, The Life of Christ, The Life and Work of Saint Paul, Message of the Books, Sermon on "Wilson the Saintly Preacher," Lecture: "De Imitatione Christi." Lecture: "Jeremy Taylor," Essays on Liberal Education, The Early Days of Christianity.*

R. P.

met with universal acceptance have started into accidental life. It is not so with the word "Christian." It indicates a decisive epoch, and was the coinage rather of a society than of any one single man. More perhaps than any word which was ever invented, it marks, if I may use the expression, the water-shed of all human history.

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By earnestly studying words we are enabled historically to resuscitate the long-forgotten history of bygone millenniums, and to catch some glimpses into the past fortunes of nations whose very name and memory have been obliterated for ages from every other record. Intellectually regarded, the study of them initiates us into the profoundest mysteries of the human understanding. It is the foundation of all metaphysics, for it is by words alone that we can discover "the manner in which ideas, born of perception, present themselves all naked to the human intelligence, while it is still engaged in their discovery and still seeking to communicate them to others; we follow the labor which it undergoes to arrive at this result, and in the want of uniformity in that labor we see the influence of different intellects."

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So important and indispensable is the right use of words to the progress of Science, that some have gone so far as to call Science itself "a well-constructed Language;" and, although this is an exaggeration, it is certain that in Scientific no less than in Religious history an ill-understood phrase, or an ambiguously-framed

expression, has been sufficient to retard the progress, and kindle the passions of men during centuries of warfare.

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The tyranny of words exists as much in the language of theology as in any other branch of human study.

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The four most marvellous and epoch-making words ever written — words which concentrate into themselves long centuries of divine history and world-wide speculations — “*The Word became flesh.*”

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By the fluid air which he articulates into human utterance man has found it easy to fill the universe with living words which are at once the pictures of its material phenomena and the “shadows of his own soul;” and on a sonorous wave, more evanescent than the tremulous laughter which ripples the summer sea, he can impress records of his outward history and of his inmost being more indestructible than Babylonian palace or Egyptian pyramid. And short as is the reach of that “pulse of articulated air,” and rapidly as its undulations disappear, he can yet grave the symbols of its vibrations on the rock, or paint them on the vellum, or print them in the book, so that they can live from generation to generation, and reach from pole to pole.

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Speech is the product of the thinking spirit; but the spirit received the first impulse of development from

the impressions of the outer world, and the needs of practical life. . . . A word is a recognized audible sign for a special definite induction or concept.

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He who has learnt grammar has gained the very key of language, and the inmost secret of the mighty mystery of speech. He has learnt to use and to value the noblest of human gifts :— the gift whereby man is raised above the beasts ;— the gift whereby soul speaks to soul ;— the gift whereby mere pulses of articulated air become breathing thoughts and burning words — the gift whereby, like the vibration of a silver chord, emotions thrill from heart to heart ; the gift whereby we understand the affections of men and give expression to the worship of God ;— the gift whereby the lips of divine inspiration, uttering things simple and unperfumed and unadorned, reacheth with its passionate voice through a thousand generations by the help of the word of God.

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By human speech, — man was in possession of a faculty, which was not only the simplest, the most unexpected and the most essential of all his faculties, but also the most spontaneous, and the most easy of consideration. He possessed in the organs of utterance a musical instrument which was at once a harp, an organ, and a flute, — a musical instrument of astonishing compass, of infinite flexibility, of most thrilling and mysterious power, on which Nature herself gave him, without any conscious effort of his own, the mastery of a finished performer.

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Fresh languages wisely acquired may afford us a nearer approximation to many truths than would be otherwise attainable, by suggesting thoughts and conclusions which have evaporated from our native tongue. "For language is the depository of the accumulated body of experience, to which all former ages have contributed their part, and which is the inheritance of all yet to come." It is "like amber circulating the electric spirit of truth, and preserving the relics of ancient wisdom."

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It is deeply interesting to pursue the contrast of the Aryan and Semitic languages, or, let us say, of two such representations of them as Greek and Hebrew—one would say that Greek is liquid, and Hebrew metallic; or that Greek is a colored sun-picture, reproducing with the minute fidelity of Nature herself every shadow on the earth and every ripple on the sea, while Hebrew is a broad, rough, unshaded sketch in the sweeping strokes of a Michael Angelo or a Tintoretto.

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God, who was "the artificer alike of the intelligence, of the voice, and of the tongue," gave to man with these three gifts the power of constructing a language for himself. . . . Speech, is the correlation of the understanding. It can express nothing which has not been developed by intelligence and thought. It can have no existence independent of, or separate from, our conception of things. It may be *unable to keep pace*

another must come out before us in most living reality, and penetrate our whole being with its inward and primitive force. So possibly may we succeed in finding once more the long-observed traces of past millenniums.

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The voice of man is produced by a machinery far more exquisite and perfect than that possessed by any other animal. . . . The elementary sounds of which the voice is capable are about twenty in number, and it is easy to see that the permutations and combinations of these sounds are amply sufficient to provide the world with an infinite variety of languages.

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To develop Language was the appointed task for the youth of humanity, and its work, as is ever the case with the work of the inspired artist, is inconceivable to the uninitiated, and wonderful to all.

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It is certain that, as a rule, and independently of all confusion between a word and the inevitable associations which it summons up, things beautiful, soft and pleasing, are generally represented by soft and pleasing words, while things which are mean and repulsive receive mean and repulsive titles. This, however, is often the result of long-continued association modifying the existing forms of language. It is only another exhibition of that instinct which demands in almost every language the observance of certain euphonious concords, and which fills with subtle specimens of paronomasia and alliteration every great work of poetry from the

Psalms of David and the precepts of Meng Trew down to the last volume of Tennyson's poems.

\* \* \*

It is a proof of the extent of metaphor that almost every color recalls at once its emblematic meaning. Black is indissolubly connected with notions of death, mourning, villainy, misfortune; white with innocence, candor, and festivity; rose-color with beauty and freshness; purple with magnificence, luxury, and pride; red and scarlet and crimson with shame and sin and crime; yellow with old age, decay and jealousy; green with springtime, vigor and youth.

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A style abounding in metaphors is now generally accepted as a proof of weakness, since for an advanced stage of thought it is necessary as far as possible to attach to each word some clear meaning, as little mingled as possible with mere external analogies.

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Many have bewailed the necessity of metaphor as the source of constant error, and the strongest proof of the weakness of our intellectual faculties. . . . But with such faculties as we *have*, metaphor and the necessity for the metaphoric element in language, becomes fruitful of blessings. It becomes a means whereby we observe and compare the analogous phenomena of the physical and intellectual world. It adds something of the grace and charm and mystery of nature to the thoughts of man. It is the very essence of our most

poetical conceptions, and the best mode of shadowing forth our profoundest intuitions.

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It is idle to complain that metaphor supposes a certain indigence, and that if the intellect exerted the power of directly and immediately seizing any phenomena, and of providing an independent expression for every modification of our minds, it would be unnecessary to drag ourselves from one analogous idea to another. Obviously we must take the mind as we find it: and since it has *not* been endowed with the power of direct intuition into the nature of things it cannot dispense with tropes and allegories; which so far from hindering and obscuring our power of insight, are, on the contrary, its mightiest assistants. . . In the true and etymological sense of the word, they illustrate, they pour a flood of light upon our thoughts. And, reversing the metaphor, we may say with equal truth, that they are the gracious clouds, through whose veil it is alone possible for us to gaze upon the too-dazzling sun. A language without figures and metaphors would of necessity be a language without poetry.

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As an example of the graceful and powerful use of metaphor take one or two passages from the writings of Jeremy Taylor:—

“So have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back by the loud sighing of an eastern



wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the liberation and frequent weighing of its wings, till the little creature sat down to pant and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learnt music from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministrations here below;—so is the prayer of a good man.” Did English prose ever combine a more playful grace with a more lyric tenderness? And when speaking of the change wrought by death, he says:—

“So, have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and at first it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven as a lamb’s fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head and broke its stalk, and at night having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and out-worn faces.” What solemn music, what delicate painting, what unrivalled aptitude of expression! Has there ever been any preacher before or since who could equal these incidental metaphors?—Yet these were mainly due to that delicious country life in which ambition seemed over, and the poet-preacher’s days were being spent face to face with Eternity, in homes where he could see the flowers blow, and the dew fall, and his soul, undisturbed by narrow cares, could climb by these sunbeams to the Father of Lights.

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The Bible teaches us its best lessons when we search its pages as wise and humble learners; when we judge of it by the truth, which we learn from it, and not by the prejudices and prepossessions which we bring to it when we seek in it the elements and bases of faith, not when we go to it for proving texts of doctrines which we already hold. . . . .

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Read your Bibles! fill your whole souls with the thought of Christ; make of Him not only a Redeemer, but a Brother; not only a Saviour, but a Friend.

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It is one of our trials that the Bible, with its tender and hallowed bearing upon all that is sweet and noble in our lives—with its words so stately and full of wonder, and full of music, like the voice of an archangel—should have been made in these days the wrangling-ground for sectarian differences: but if with our whole hearts we are striving to live according to its spirit, we need fear but little that we shall trip in a right pronounciation of the shibboleths of its letter. Surely it is deplorable that, because of mere questions which after all are but questions of doubtful authorship, of historical accuracy, of verbal criticism, having for the most part little or no bearing on the spiritual or moral life, party should be denouncing party, and Christian excommunicating Christian, and so many hands tearing in anger the seamless robe of Christ. It is, alas, the due punishment for our lack of charity, our Phari-

saism, our unwisdom, that while we have been so eager about such controversies, the love of many should have waxed cold. Yet they who thus cease altogether to reverence God's written word, lose one of the most elevating, one of the most comforting influences of human life.

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Let me entreat you not to confuse mere questions of exegetical or scientific learning with the deep, awful, imperishable lessons which the Bible, and the Bible only, can bring home to your souls. In whatever way those questions may be decided, the infinite inner sacredness of God's word remains inviolate forever. There may be shifting clouds about it, but through them break gleams of the eternal radiance; there may be mingled voices, but clear and loud among them all are heard the utterances of eternal wisdom. Other books may make you learned or eloquent or subtle: this book alone can make you wise unto salvation. Other books may fascinate the intellect; by this alone can you cleanse the heart. In other literatures may trickle here and there some shallow runnel from the "unemptiable fountain of wisdom," — and even these, alas! turbid too often with human passions, fretted with human obstacles, and choked at last in morass or sand, — but in this book, majestic and fathomless, flows the river of the water of life itself, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb.

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Be sure that the hour will come not rarely to you in the destinies of life — the hour of sickness, of bereave-

ment, of bitter disappointment, of deathful agony — when all other knowledge and all other insight shall be as useless dross; but every text stored up in the memory, each pure lesson, each bright example from the sacred page, shall be to your stricken and fainting soul “better than gold, yea, then much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”

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How deep are the lessons involved in the story of the Fall, and how little are they affected by any of the innumerable criticisms to which it has given rise. Men have long been questioning whether it be a divine philosopheme or a literal fact: whether man arose in one or, like the fauna and the flora which surround him, in many centres: whether the material elements of which our bodies are composed sprang at a single creative fiat into full-grown and perfect manhood, or in virtue of one omnific law had been swept by the magic eddy of nature's unseen agencies through generations of lower organisms; whether Adam and Eve, and the happy garden, and the tempting serpent, and the waving sword of the Cherubim, and the trees of knowledge and of life, be transparent allegory or historic narrative. Enter, my brethren, if you will, into such inquiries, secure and undismayed, if you but carry in your hands the golden clues of humility and prayer; nothing doubting that by such a spirit you shall know of the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Only remember that such inquiries do not touch for a moment the deep importance of the sacred narrative, or its direct personal bearing on our religious life. The

lessons to be here learnt are moral, not ethnological; spiritual, not scientific. For even if the facts be not literal, they remain divinely and unalterably true. To prove that they are so needs neither learning nor research: it needs but the solemn light of each man's personal experience; it needs but that spirit of man which is the "candle of the Lord." The story reveals to us how sin came into the world, and death by sin, and we find each one of us, that it is even thus, and thus only, and thus always, that sin enters into each individual heart. The history is no dead letter, but a living symbol, a sacred symbol which neither scepticism can disparage, nor experience can modify, nor philosophy enlarge; it contains the very essence and principle of the whole matter, and he who would have a thorough insight into the origin of sin may learn more, though he be a child, from these few and simple verses, lighted up by such a commentary as his own experience may furnish, than from all else that the united wisdom of mankind has ever discovered on the subject with which they deal.

\* \* \*

Oh learn—above all learn in these days in which too often the Bible is degraded into a wrangling-ground for sectarian differences,—learn to love and reverence it aright. May it ever be associated in our minds with all things which are "soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good." In its words, while yet we were helpless infants, we were admitted into that fold whereof Christ is the good Shepherd; out of its words a mother—now it may be a saint in heaven—taught

us at her knee to be early accustomed to the story of our Saviour's love. In its words of mystery and beauty we received the blessing of God as we stood beside the marriage-altar. In its words of healing and hope we found the thoughts of consolation and the promises of immortality, when Death broke pitilessly into the circle of our beloved. We have read its words with eyes blinded by tears in old churches far away ; and its words have breathed into our souls a sweet and healing calm even as we bent over the open grave where we had just laid our best beloved into the dust. Never shall we know until the last great day what life histories hang upon its every page. It is like that tree of northern fable, whose leaves were the lives of men. How often, in the crucial moments of temptation, have its remembered words prevented the commission of some dread crime ; how often, flashing into the memory, has it awakened the slumbering conscience with thunder-crashes of remorse. How often has the drowning sailor thought of it when, in some lone sea, the breaker swept him from the stranded vessel into the seething depths ; how often the dying soldier as he lay face upwards, in the cold moonlight, on the battle-field, with his life-blood ebbing from his wounds ; and men and women, on peaceful death beds, die most often with its words upon their lips, when they turn from their sobbing families to wet the pillow with their weak tears and die. Oh let us treasure, let us love the words which come to us hallowed and intensified with such wondrous associations of childhood and innocence, of marriage and sickness, of eternity and death.

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The Bible is often degraded by superstitious usage : — the dogmatist gets out of it a “charlatan’s philosophy,” — the ignorant quotes its words as though they were a material talisman, — the fanatic snatches from it the weapons wherewith he would stab his neighbor’s hopes : — it has been made, times without number, the cloak of the Pharisee and the shield of the tyrant, the fagot of the inquisitor and the fetter of the slave — but, however men may pervert, they cannot rob it of its glory, they can never make it less than that which it has been, and is, and must be still, the hope and anchor of the soul, — the light-house lamp, that glows in divine calm above the uproar of impotent waves.

\* \* \*

Thank God — there is one book — the Book of Books, which we all perforce hear, and in which day by day we read. In all great literature you may learn to see God, but best and clearest there ; and we might be content to sacrifice the rest of human wisdom for all which that one sentence means — “Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Oh if you can read nothing else which is calm and good and true, read that book ; its teachings will stay with you in lines of blessing when the world itself has begun to fade away.

\* \* \*

The Hebrew has handed down to posterity a permanent literature, and although his race has been intrusted with but one memorable work for mankind, yet that

literature is of absolutely priceless value, and that work is the most infinite of all in its bearings, for the literature is the Bible, and the work is the dissemination of a belief in the One True God. If there be a meager sterility in the Hebrew's words, there is an infinitude in their power. The very subjectivity of his emotions, the introspective egotism of his whole spiritual constitution, led him in his deep meditations to educate forever the conscience of mankind, and drew him forth at one period with fanatic proselytism to spread among races, in all other respects his superiors, his sublime faith in the unity of God.

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We profess to regard the Bible as the one sacred book. We profess to derive from it, almost exclusively, the doctrines of our faith and the rules of our conduct. We turn to it in hours of temptation; we find in it the songs of our purest rejoicing; the memory of the dead passes into it; the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses; it speaks to us with a music that can never be forgotten; we read it by the bedsides of the dying, and over the graves of our beloved. Yet how many of us even approximately understand it? How many of us obtain from this one Book of God the treasure, and the joy, and the peace which we might obtain from it, better and in larger measure, than from all the books which fill the world?

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The fact that the Gospels are, to borrow the phrase of St. Augustine, "various, not contrary," is a distinct



advantage. They thus become as it were the sacred stereoscope which sets before us the life of our Saviour, not in its bare surface, but in its living solidity. . . . The first three give us more of the external incidents of the life of Christ, and hence were called by some early writers the bodily Gospels, the fourth, more of its inmost spiritual meaning. . . . The first thus deal more with action; St. John with contemplation. The first thus speak more of the labor and of the way; the fourth, more of the rest and of the home. . . . Their circumstantial differences recall the variety of Nature; their substantial agreement resembles its marvellous and essential unity. For the object of each and all of the Gospels is that expressed by St. John, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name."

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The Bible rightly used is eminently the book of freedom. . . . Its spiritual law is a perfect law of liberty. The very spirit of its Gospel is "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

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Each book of Scripture as we read it, seems to possess a supreme claim upon our love and admiration. Each book has its own unique lessons, its own special beauties.

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St. Matthew desired to link the Present to the Past; to point to the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies;

to prove that Jesus was the Messiah of the Jew, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. St. Luke wrote to connect Christianity with the advancing future; to associate the work of Jesus with Humanity; to set Him forth as the Son of Adam, the Saviour of the world. St. John wrote to connect Christ with the Eternal; to serve the deepest needs of the soul; to satisfy the most yearning aspirations of the spirit. The object of St. Mark in his concise, vigorous, vivid Gospel was more limited, though not less necessary. It was to manifest Jesus as He had been in the present, in daily actual life; Jesus living and working among men, in the fulness of His energy; Jesus in the awe-inspiring grandeur of his human personality as a Man who was also the Incarnate, the wonder-working Son of God.

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The Gospels . . . only consider what they are to us. In the dim hours of sorrow and bereavement; in the hours when like a grotto of icicles under the noonday beam, all our vain hopes, all our cherished aspirations are melting into a rain of tears; in the hours of painful lassitude, when we hear

Time flowing through the middle of the night,

in the hour when, like an uncertain echo in the lonely corridors of some house, we hear far-off the monotonous footfall of approaching death; what is it that calms, and comforts, and soothes us then? is it any discovery of science? is it any scheme of philosophy? is it any-

thing that orator has uttered and poet sung? Nay, when the melody of lyric songs has lost its charm, and the music of memory and her siren daughters has been brought low, we still listen — when we can listen to nothing else — to the Beatitudes which Christ spake to the multitudes as they sat listening among the mountain lilies, or to those last words which on the same night that He was betrayed He spake to his beloved ones.

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It is true that different Psalms are the echo of different moods; and the wild utterance of anguish where-with the soul “cries out of the depths” to the living God, requires a different condition of mind for its realization to that wherein David bids “take the Psalm and bring hither the tabret, the merry harp with the lute.” But surely this is the very reason why the Psalms, when many are assembled, contain something suitable for the various moods of every worshipper. They are the echoes of a deep and passionate emotion; the records of a struggling yet noble life; and because they came fresh and burning from the heart, they will enter fresh and burning into it, and will cause to vibrate forever the finest and most musical chords of human sympathy. Of David, it might be truly said as of the angel of Mahometan legend, that his heart-strings were a lute. He learnt in suffering what he taught in song. Through all that wonderful and moving life of his; from the time when, as a boy, he lived among his mountain flocks and smote the lion and the bear, to the glorious youth, in which he slew the giant, and lulled with his

melodies the evil spirit which vexed the dark soul of his king, — through all the long reign which dawned in fame, and splendor, and manhood, and set in dotage and tears and blood, — this man, who, though he had sunk into abhorred acts, was yet counted among the saints of God, has left us in these Psalms, as on a harp with a thousand strings, the thrilling record of every sublime thought, of every troubled moment, of every fiery experience which swept over the horizon of his soul. He was a sinner indeed, but it is

The sin which practice burns into the blood,  
And not the one dark hour that brings remorse,  
That stamps us after of whose fold we be:

and these Psalms are the living picture of a heart which, in spite of all its awful failures, was yet longing, yearning, praying continually, with all its energies and through all its agonies, for that which was noble, and pure and good: and therefore so long as our souls also live and struggle and fail, so long will these Psalms of David supply us with the fittest language in which to find vent for our experiences; so long will they cheer the depression of the mournful, and check the carelessness of the mirthful; so long will they teach us how best to pray against our temptations, how best to bewail our sins.

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Oh! when I remember how many good and great books there are — books which a life-time could not exhaust, books every one of which would make the true reader wiser, better, nobler, — loftier in intellectual

stature and in moral strength,— and which yet are left unread,— I stand amazed to think of that silent assembly of uncrowned kings which is beckoning to us in vain, while yet we will not ask the philosopher for the gathered treasures of his wisdom, or the orator for the thunder of his eloquence, or the poet for the magic of his song.

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Every book worth calling a book is written with an object.

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Never was anything good, or true, or wise, written or spoken without the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, and in reading such words you read a revelation of Him. Books, which are "the true reliquaries of the saints, but without imposture,"— books which with a potent yet innocent necromancy enable us to wake from their dim tombs the spirits of the dead,— books, which are the best heart's blood of great men "embalmed for a life beyond life"— they are well-nigh the richest privilege and quite the worthiest, the most unshaken and incorruptible friends we can possess.

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The language of fervour must be fresh from the soul, if it aims at kindling any answering glow.

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No book can achieve a permanent or an universal popularity unless, to an unusual degree, it meets the wants and stirs the feelings of the human heart. . . .

When we find a work valued in all countries — when it is equally popular in every language — when its original influence survives the great secular changes which alter the dynasties, the philosophies, nay, even the religions of mankind — it must then be either the expression of the loftiest individual genius, or into it, as into some sacred goblet, must have been crushed the rich clusters of the wisdom of centuries.

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Read great books; enrich your minds with noble sentiments.

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“You must not only listen, but read, you must not only read, but think;” knowledge, it has been said, without common sense is folly, without method it is waste, without kindness it is fanaticism, without religion it is death — aye, but — and every page of the New Testament confirms the lesson — with common sense it is wisdom; with method it is power; with charity it is beneficence, with religion it is virtue, and life, and peace.

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If the value of a book can in any way be gauged by the hold it wins upon the attention of myriads, then the value of the *De Imitatione Christi* must be indeed immense. It has been in man's hands for at least four hundred and fifty years! its editions in various ages and in various languages are to be counted by thousands; it has been a favorite with readers of every rank: . . . in the latter half of this nineteenth

century it is probable that there are few who are not familiar with those brief "quivering sentences" which make us feel while we read them as though we laid our hand upon the heart — throbbing with sorrows like our own — which beat so many centuries ago in the old mystic's breast. . . . The whole book has been compared to a monastic garden, flourishing under the dew of heaven, and filled with "the lilies of a purity whiter than snow, the roses of divine love, the blue cyaneas of heavenly meditation, the dark violets of nightly prayer." . . . Whoever was the compiler of the book did but gather into one rich casket the religious yearnings, the interior consolations, the wisdom of solitary experience which had been wrung from many ages of Christian life. In this sense the bold saying of François de Sales is true, that "the book has no other author than the Holy Spirit of God."

And therefore, since it is the clearest expression of an eternal yearning of the soul in its profound self-questioning, its unshrinking introspection, its pathetic familiarity with its Creator — the book cannot die. . .

. . . . How simple, and how profound, are the chapters on thoroughly searching our own conscience, and on holy purposes of amendment! and how permanent is the value of that view which is the fundamental view of all mysticism, that God has revealed Himself in His *works* and in His *love*, so that, both without man's soul and within, the natural and the supernatural co-exist eternally, and He hath not left himself without witness to any living thing. . . . . In this book there is no interference between the soul and

God ; no vulgarizing of the emotions by unbarring them to human eye ; no wearing of the soul upon the sleeve for daws to peck at ; no human foot intruding between us and the mercy-seat ; no dabbling of the profane hand of human confessor in the secrets of the microcosm. It is an audience-chamber where no ambassador is needed ; . . . . It sends the penitent neither to book nor formula, neither to Church nor Council, neither to Pope nor Priest, neither to Saint nor Angel, but, go, it says, and clasp thy very Saviour's feet. It teaches the soul not to hide itself among the garden-trees, but even in its guiltiness to listen to the voice of God.

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There is scarcely a single writer of genius — especially if he has been also a writer of splendid originality — who has not been a mark for thousands of hostile arrows and it would be strange indeed, if there were no joints in human armour through which one or other of these arrows could find its way.

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The preciousness of a book may sometimes best be estimated if we consider the loss which we should experience if we did not possess it.

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We know a man truly when we know him at his greatest and his best : we realize his significance for ourselves and for the world when we see him in the noblest activity of his career, on the loftiest summit, and in the fullest glory of his life. There are lives which may be instructive from their very littleness, and it may be well



that the biographer of such lives should enter into detail. But of the best and greatest it may be emphatically asserted that to know more about them would only be to know less of them.

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God has revealed Himself, not in one, but in many ways; not only by inspiring the hearts of a few, but by vouchsafing His guidance to all who seek it. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord," and it is not religion but apostasy to deny the reality of any of God's revelations of truth to man, merely because they have not descended through a single channel. On the contrary, we ought to hail with gratitude, instead of viewing with suspicion, the enumeration by heathen writers of truths which we might at first sight have been disposed to regard as the special heritage of Christianity.

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"Where shall I put the Fra Angelico?"

"Dear old Beato," said Violet, "put him opposite the door, that he may give a sensation of peace and beauty, to every one who enters the room." . . . So they hung it in a good light, directly facing the door. It was a chromo-lithograph of Angelico's Frankfort picture, and was pleasant to look at as a mere effect of color, from the predominance of blue and gold. . . . Exactly in the centre, under a baldaccino, with a roof of blue and gold, sits the Virgin, her tresses hidden, but her fair, holy, tender face visible under the graceful and exquisitely symmetrical folds of her falling robe of pale blue, which is edged with a thin golden broidery

and clasped by a gem over her bosom. In her arms is the Holy Child, the figure infantine with the first flaxen hair, but the face full of mystery and love. On either side, round the steps of the throne, is a crown of choir-ing angels, six on either side, each corresponding to each, all with their glorious faces turned toward the Virgin and Child, each in a different attitude of awe and worship, with white hands uplifted and intertwined, and lambent flames over their foreheads, symbolizing the fervor of love, and shedding a roseate glow over their star-like nimbuses and waving curls. Each of their glories is golden, and pierced with small flower-like dots, except that of the Infant Saviour, whose golden halo is broken by the red lines of a cross. The whole is on a golden ground, which admirably throws out the radiant and mingled colors of the dove-like angelic wings. No one could look thoughtfully at the picture without a feeling of deep devotion, and without a reverence for the great and holy painter, who painted only for God's glory, who refused all praise as due only to the subjects which he chose, and who rightly attributed to inspiration his power of seeing and of representing the spiritual beauty of those young, unfading, seraphic faces that reflect forever the emerald of the rainbow and the sunlight of the throne.

"The Ribera will be a capital pendant to Fra Angelico," said Julian. "Yes," said Mrs. Home; "there will be something suggestive to a thoughtful mind in the contrast of the Virgin Mother with the *bien heureuse pêcheresse*." The picture—a fine engraving of Spagnoletto's *chef-d'œuvre*—represented St. Mary of Egypt

kneeling in an attitude of wrapt devotion beside her own open grave, while over her fair shoulders, and rippling down to her bare feet, stream the long disheveled tresses of her dark hair, touched into a golden gleam where the light falls on it, and veiling her whole form in its soft drapery, while an angel clothes her in the pure raiment, bathed in the blood

Which hath this might —  
That, being red, it dyes red soules to white.

“And where shall we hang this?” said Julian, taking up a photograph of Van Dyck’s great painting of Jacob’s Dream. The Hebrew boy is sleeping on the ground, and his long dark curls, falling off his forehead, mingle with the rich foliage of the surrounding plants, fanned by the waving of mysterious wings; a cherub is lightly raising the embroidered cap that partially shades his face, and at his feet, blessing him with uplifted hand, stands a majestic angel, on whose flowing robes of white gleams a celestial radiance from the vista, alight with heavenly faces that opens over his head. A happy and holy slumber seems to breathe from the lad’s countenance, and yet you can tell that the light of dreams has dawned under his “closed eyelids” and that the inward eye has caught full sight of that Beatific Epiphany.

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In point of fact, Art may be regarded as a language. We have read of a sculptor who conveyed, by means of a statue, the intense impression produced in his

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mind by the dawn of a summer day ; and there is scarcely a thought, an emotion, or a fact that may not be conveyed by painting. Imitation — a fundamental principle on which rests the possibility of any communication between two sentient beings — may appeal as directly to the eye as to the ear.

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Christianity only discouraged Art so long as Art was the handmaid of idolatry and vice ; the moment this danger ceased she inspired and ennobled Art.

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One of those pictures, at once so lovely and so awe-inspiring, of one of the early Italian painters — an Angelico da Fiesole, or a Giovanni Bellini — where in coloring fresh as the flowers of spring, or deep, clear, and transparent as crystal, the Magi from the East present their offerings to the Infant King ; or where He hangs on the Cross of shame — and though we see on the canvas the ornaments on every robe, the gleam on every jewel, the colors of every flower, yet the admiration for each separate detail, and almost the sense that they are painted there, is lost in the wonder, in the reverence, in the adoration, in the love, inspired by the intense beauty and unutterable majesty of Him in whom all the motive of the picture is centered, and in whom all its glories blend. . . . Amid the thousand details we see but the one Redeemer . . . our eye rests but on a single figure.

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The influence of music is powerful and holy ; and, in

the words of an old Father, they must have hearts very dry and tough for whom the sweetness and softness of that which toucheth the ear does not convey as it were by stealth the treasure of good things into man's mind. "From whom the melody of the Psalms doth not sometimes draw that wherein a religious soul delighteth;" and have your hearts never leapt within you, when, with the rolling tones of the organ music and choral song, you sang in passionate exultation "praise the Lord of heaven; praise him in the height; praise Him all ye angels of His; praise Him all His host; praise Him sun and moon; praise Him all ye stars and light?" or have you never thrilled with sudden emotion at the swelling jubilation of the strains which tell how God scattered His enemies as stubble before the wind?

Those who, in a world of sorrow and mammon-worship, are glad and thankful for any noble pleasure which can raise and inspire the soul above its low-thoughted cares — which can breathe into it, even for an hour, something of that high happiness which God intended for every innocent heart, — will rejoice to hear the powers of music dedicated to God's praise, and will be sure that He who made the common air thrill with ten thousands melodies, will not be displeased that our worship upon earth should catch some faint echo of that "sevenfold chorus of Hallelujahs and harping symphonies" wherewith the songs of angels encircle His heavenly throne.

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Not by singing "Lord, Lord," but by doing the will of Christ, shall you enjoy a foretaste of heaven. No

numbers of Hallelujahs, sung with an unloving heart, can bring you one step nearer to the throne : — and he who chants the Trisagion of the Seraphim with lips uncircumcised, offers a service as little pleasing as the blasphemy of the condemned. Your songs, your service — these may be to you a crystal river of unreprieved enjoyment ; they may become turbid and wearisome, an unprofitable burden, an idle form. But, for the heart which is cleansed and calm, not these only but life itself becomes a Sabbath, whose inward rest no agitations can disturb ; a service which no weariness can invade ; a hymn on which no discord can jar !

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The yearning passion of music — You may have heard Haydn's oratorio of the Creation. You remember then the fine recitative : " And God said, Let there be light ; " and then how the music begins first as in a rapid flow of soft and golden ripples, which roll on into wave after wave, billow after billow, tide on tide of resistless sound, as though heaved forward by the infinite world of waters behind it, till at last, in a crashing overwhelming outburst, which concentrates into one crowning note all wonder and all exultation, come forth the words, " And there was Light ? "

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Those hymns which you sing, — embalming some of the holiest thoughts of some of the holiest men — how happy, how truly a delightful a part of God's service are they ! What a page of the soul's story would that be which should tell us of the origin of our favorite

hymns! "God is our refuge in distress" sprang like a spark of fire from the glowing soul of Luther in the year when the Princes of Germany presented to the Diet of Spire that celebrated Protest from which is derived the name of Protestant. "Lo, he comes in clouds descending" expresses the thought of Cennick during the tumults and horrors of European war. "Jerusalem the Golden" echoes in Doctor Neal's translation the immortal yearnings of Bernard of Cluny. "O for a closer walk with God" is the deep sigh of Cowper when the cloud of insanity was overshadowing one of the tenderest and sweetest of Christian souls. "From Greenland's icy mountains" tells of that bright philanthropy which sent the noble spirit of Heber from all his high English prospects to die in his Indian bishopric. "Oft in sorrow, oft in woe," was written in fragments on the backs of the mathematical papers of Henry Kirk White, when that eagle intellect was already being pierced by a shaft winged from its own plumes.

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,  
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide;  
When other comforts fail, and helpers flee,  
Friend of the friendless, oh abide with me,

was written by Henry Lyte, when the deep chill waters of death's river were beginning already to close around him.

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Even discords can be inwrought into the vast sequence of some mighty harmony, but what great music can be achieved with but a single note?

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Words come surging upon the memory on the rolling waves of organ-music, and choral song.

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More various than the circumstances under which hymns have been written, are the circumstances under which they have been sung. It was after they had sung a hymn that our dear and blessed Lord crossed the brook Kedron to enter on His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; it was with hymns that Paul and Silas, their backs scorched and bleeding with Roman rods, solaced their midnight solitude in the dungeon of Philippi; it was the song of boy singers with their hymnal that woke up the fasting Luther from his dangerous swoon in the cell of Erfurdt! it was a little girl singing a hymn on the doorstep of her home that comforted the banished Melancthon in the streets of Weimar; it was with hymns that the camp of William the Conqueror resounded on the eve of the great battle that changed for centuries the destinies of England: they sang in the sweet valleys of the Vandris while they were being deluged with innocent blood; they have given enthusiasm to the warrior as he rode to danger; they have cheered the martyr's soul in the hour of death.

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They rose from the table and united their voices in a Hymn; which may well have been a portion of the great Hallel — What an imperishable interest is derived from such an association!



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However much the dreams of human pride and the splendor of human intellect may pass away, the lives and labors of good men in no wise pass away with their external surroundings. Nay, far rather they are the seed sown in weeping, of which others, it may be long centuries afterwards, gather in the sheaves with joy.

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Labor is a pure and noble thing; it is the salt of life; it is the girdle of manliness.

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“He went about doing” this, which is the epitome of Christ’s public life constitutes also its sublimest originality. . . . How overwhelming an amount of ever active benevolence was crowded into the brief compass of the hours of light.

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It was the first law of Eden, “work,” and though the work was changed to toil by a penal decree, even that toil by faithful obedience has been transformed into an honor and a blessing. “It is,” as St. Chrysostom calls it, “a bitter arrow from the gentle hand of God.” But then the work must be approached in a right spirit, must be work in God’s vineyard, and work for God. Thousands of men work, nay, toil, nay, grind and slave with a blind groping illiberal absorption at their often vulgar and mechanical routine; not for duty, or for the glory of God, or for the blessing of man, but simply to further their own interests. Such work followed in

such a spirit is but a little less baneful than idleness ; if it does not corrupt the habits, it ossifies the heart. Unblessed of God, it is often burned up in a minute, after it has been followed for a life, and even when most successful it can bring neither happiness here nor hope hereafter. But on the other hand, few earthly paths are more rich in intrinsic and immediate blessing than when, with earnest undivided hearts, with lofty unselfish purpose, we devote our lives to God's service. The man who does it may know well, and know long beforehand, that he shall never live to see the fruits of his labors ; he may know that they will cost him strong contempt, and secret dislike, and incessant opposition ; he may know that they will ruin his earthly prospects, and leave him with ample cause for anxiety and care ; but yet such a man, if he trusts in God, if he be trying, however poorly, to follow Christ will not lack of inward consolation which is loftier and sweeter than happiness itself. He will have no time for evil thoughts ; every day he will work as if he had to live forever ; he will live as if he had to die at once ; and when he lies down at night in happy and trustful weariness, the angels of God will breathe over him an evening blessing, and shut to the doors of his heart. Till at last the weary day is over, and it ringeth to evensong ; the work is done, the rest is prepared for him in heavenly mansions, and God giveth His beloved sleep.

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Do not let us fancy that our work must cease of necessity with our lives. Not so ; for rather must we believe that it will continue forever ; seeing that we are

all partakers of God's unspeakable blessing, the common mystery of immortality.

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If there has been no work, there can be no rest. It was the first law that God gave in Eden, Work :—it is the last blessing that He utters, Enter now that thy work is over, into thy rest. Here is thy place of work ; the great garden of the earth to be tilled ; the great vineyard of the earth to be tended, and its fruits rendered, and its waste places cleared. Work, till death release thee ; then shalt thou have earned, thus only canst thou obtain, thus only couldst thou enjoy, thy rest. For the idle, for the useless, for the self-indulgent, there is no place in heaven.

For not on downy plumes, or under shade,  
Of canopy reposing, heaven is won.

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O how pitiful, how dreary, how unutterably despicable will appear, when the end cometh, a life spent in doing nothing :—how dreary, when the end cometh, will appear the life of the worldling and the sluggard, the life of the unlit lamp, and the ungirded loin, the life of the buried talent and the neglected vine !

“And their works do follow them :” — their true works, that is not their schemes of ambition, or their dreams of hope. These are the dross that melt in the burning, when the pure gold remains. There is no deeper and more instructive lesson in history than this : — the manner in which all the deeds done by great men

from self-interest or pride perish and rot, while their true works, their disinterested labors, their genuine beliefs, live and grow. Those are the houses upon the sand, these the houses upon the rock. Those are weak, evanescent, illusory ; these are real, permanent, eternal.

Is it those only who are great, or those only who are splendidly good, whose works do follow them? God forbid. What are among these works? Are there not, as He Himself has told us, such little things as the widow's mite, and the cup of cold water given for His sake?

There is a greatness in unknown names, there is an immortality of quiet duties, attainable by the meanest of human kind ; and when the Judge shall reverse the tables many of these last shall be the first. Do not be dazzled by the world's false judgments. The slave is often nobler than the sovereign, and the common soldier than the general.



To fill a little space because God wills it ; to go on cheerfully with a petty round of little duties, little avocations ; to accept uncomplainingly a low position ; to be misunderstood, misrepresented, maligned, without complaint : to smile for the joys of others when the heart is aching :—to banish all ambition, all pride, and all restlessness, in a single regard to our Saviour's work ; he who does this is a greater hero than he who for one hour storms a breach, or for one day rushes onward undaunted in the flaming front of shot and shell. His works will follow him. He may not be a hero to the world, but he is one of God's heroes, and though

the builders of Nineveh and Babylon be forgotten and unknown, his memory shall live, and shall be blessed, and he shall sit down before earth's noblest and mightiest at the marriage supper of the Lord.

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Are your works good works, or no works, or bad works? If they are worthless, if they are pernicious, pray to God with all your heart and soul that for Christ's sake He do not make you eat of the fruit of such works, but enable you to do such good works which he that doeth shall even live in them.

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Work is the best birthright which man still retains. It is the strongest of moral tonics, the most vigorous of mental medicines.

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If you take work as the holy and noble law of life, it shall save you from a thousand petty annoyances, a thousand sickly day-dreams and morbid discontents.

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No good deed, no genuine sacrifice, is ever wasted. If there be good in it, God will use it for His own holy purposes: and whatever of ignorance, or weakness or mistake, was mingled with it, will drop away as the withered sepals drop away when the full flower has blown.

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God *never* lavishes gratuitously that which man can earn by faithful industry; this is an axiom which may

be confidently claimed, a truth which may be broadly asserted, of every discovery which was possible to man or to the intelligence of man.

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Work is a duty — the work of conscious, steady self improvement, the will, nay the resolve, nay the solemn vow, nay, the inflexible absorbing purpose, that each year shall see us better, holier, wiser than the last. And this work, too, must be with our might; it must be in penitence, and watchfulness, and self-denial. But *then* it must and will succeed; aye, succeed with the highest of all successes, — that success which includes and exceeds all others; and beside which all others shrink into insignificance — the prosperity of a heart at peace with God. Other prosperity may or may not follow, it generally does, but it is no great matter whether it does or not, that loss is more than compensated by a peace of mind which does not even desire it. No true work since the world began has ever failed.

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“God buries His workmen, but carries on their work.” It is not for any earthly reward that God’s heroes have sought — not even for the reward of hoping in the posthumous success of the cause to which they have sacrificed their lives. All questions of success or failure they have been content to leave in the hands of God. Their one desire has been to be utterly true to the best that they have known; their prayers have all been simplified to this alone — “Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee, for thou art my God; let Thy loving

Spirit lead me into the land of righteousness." That God has seemed to be careless of their individual happiness they would be the last to complain; though He slay them, yet do they trust in Him. Failure was to St. Paul a word unknown. He knew that to fail — or seem to fail — in the cause of God, was to succeed beyond the dream of earthly ambition.

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How is any other work worth doing, until the initial work, the work of self-conquest, the work of setting our own hearts right with God has been performed? He who would help others to be better, must first be good himself; he who would point others to the path which leads to their Saviour's feet, must first have found it for himself.

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It was in utter stillness, in prayerfulness, in the quiet round of daily duties — like Moses in the wilderness, like David among the sheep-folds, like Elijah among the tents of the Bedouin, like Jeremiah in his quiet home at Anathoth, like Amos in the sycamore groves of Tekoa — that the boy Jesus prepared himself amid a hallowed obscurity, for His mighty work on earth.

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We can only begin to do Christ's work in striving to make His world better, by personal innocence, by personal holiness. Ah! how many will stumble over this entrance!

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While there is anything to be done the time given to inactive sorrow is worse than wasted. Sorrow may take

from life its delights, but thank God it can never take its duties. At the lowest ebb of dejection we still have much to do.

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“Doe the next thyng,” — what a grand motto that was! And that was a good motto, *Repos ailleurs*. Work here, rest is elsewhere; wipe thy tears; cease thy sighing; do thy work.

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“Patient continuance in well doing,” this is a grand remedy for idle tears. Is it not an inspiring and cheering thought to regard our life as a term of service in the high cause of God, and ourselves as “co-operate units” in His vast designs?

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The vast majority of us are placed, by God’s own appointment, amid those quiet duties of a commonplace and uneventful routine which are most closely analogous to the thirty years of Christ’s retirement — it was during those years that His life is for us the main example of how we ought to live.

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While you work, you must remember that you are not, or ought not, to be working for yourselves, or your own selfish interests alone, but also, and mainly, for the good of others.

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Labor for God is the best cure for sorrow, and the best occupation of life.



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To live lives of heroic devotion to all that is brave, and honest and true . . . to be in such charity with all men as to scorn all petty malignities, whether of word or deed, to love the Lord Jesus Christ with all our hearts and never to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by sin wilfully indulged . . . this is the hardest of all tasks, the longest and the sternest of all toils.

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They whose work it is to win multitudes to Christ, to show religion in all its wealth and attractiveness, to make it wear a winning aspect in the eyes of all who love mercy and culture, have always aroused the alarmed antagonism of more timid natures.

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Fevered work, flurried work, anxious work, restless work, is always bad work. Work all of you as if you felt and realized "the dignity of work, the innocence of work, the happiness of work, the holiness of work." Do your best loyally and cheerfully, and suffer yourself to feel no anxiety or fear. Your times are in God's hands. He has assigned you your place. He will direct your paths. He will accept your efforts if they be faithful. He will bless your aims if they be for your soul's good.

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Before each one of us—a pillar of a cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night,—glides visibly the protecting Providence of God. Wonderful deliverances are vouch-

safed to us. Enemies pursue us, and we must fly from them. Enemies confront us, and we must fight with them. Vividly and distinctly, loudly and intelligibly, — as among the burning summits and thunder-beaten crags of Sinai, — blaze for us the majestic utterances of the moral law. Simple and sweet as virgin honey, — if we will only live thereon, — lies round us the angel's food; clear and crystalline, — if we will but drink thereof, — murmurs and shines about us the river of God's love.

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The doing of good is not a work of unmixed happiness, for good men can never do all the good they desire.

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As long as we stand firm where God's Providence hath set our feet we are secure. "He shall defend thee under His wings, and thou shalt be safe under His feathers: His righteousness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler."

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It is the hand of God that weaves the pattern which He requires in the web of noble lives! and thus even by those dispensations which seem most afflictive He is preparing us, so that we may best do His work, which is and ought to be our own.

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The overruling Providence of God is so clearly marked in the progress of human events that the Christian hardly needs any further proof that "there is a hand

that guides." In the events of his own little life the perspective of God's dealings is often hidden from him, but when he watches the story of nations and of religions he can clearly trace the divine purposes, and see the lessons which God's hand has written on every page of history. What seems to be utter ruin is often complete salvation ; what was regarded as cruel disaster constantly turns out to be essential blessing. We are where God has placed us, and there we must stay till He gives us the signal to fall out of the ranks.

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Divine Providence is no far-off abstraction but a living and loving care over the lives of men.

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We see that Providence has ordained that many of the documents from which we derive our faith should be in the form of epistolary intercourse. And this so far from being a matter of regret was a happy circumstance. We might, indeed, assume *a priori* that the form chosen for the dissemination of the Gospel by the Providence of God was the best that could be chosen. And it may be safely asserted that the hold which the New Testament has taken on the minds of men has been due in great measure to its personal element. Christian theology would have been immeasurably less effective if it had been conveyed to the world in canons, or articles, or liturgies, or scholastic treatises.

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The word martyr originally meant witness, and nothing more.

The essence of all martyrdom is witness to the truth of God: and though the wild beast bounds no longer upon its victim in the crowded amphitheatre, and the flames feed not on human limbs at the kindled stake, there are martyrdoms of life no less than of death, and in modern as well as ancient times.

Almost any man will confront peril with a multitude; scarcely one in a thousand will stand alone against a multitude when they are bent on wrong. Thousands again will risk all for a hoary prejudice! only the true martyr souls bear the battle-brunt which will abide to the death by a new or a forgotten truth, and this was the courage of St. Stephen. Though only a Hellenist among Hebrews — only a deacon among Apostles — he had seen deeper into Christianity than any of his brethren. He saw, with perfect clearness, two great principles which dawned but slowly and dimly upon their minds. One was that the law of Moses as a system was doomed to pass away — fading even as the glory faded from his once-illuminated face: the other was that Christianity was to be a free revelation, not to Jews only, but to all the world: — that henceforth all mankind was to be a brotherhood, with equal privileges, in the great family of God: — that in Christ Jesus there was to be neither Greek nor Jew, neither barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ all and in all. And since it had been given him to see these truths, and their infinite importance, he was ready even to die for them. It did not damp his ardour to stand utterly alone amid the raging controversies of hostile synagogues. His was no mere flaring enthusiasm which

smouldered at the breath of danger. He did not even quail when he found himself face to face with the stern menace of the Jewish Sanhedrim. They bent on him their fierce frowns: they glared on him with angry eyes: but still his face was as the face of an angel, and his upward gaze saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And so he delivered his glowing testimony, uttered his bold rebuke; and, not flinching when they seized him to drag him to his doom — even when he lay in anguish under the heaped stones, he struggled to his knees, and praying for his murderer's, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," he fell asleep.

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You must not think that the martyrs had any spell which secured them an immunity from pain. "They shrank from suffering like other men, but such natural shrinking was incommensurable with apostasy." No intensity of torture could affect a mental conviction, and so adequate a support and consolation to them in death was the sovereign thought in which they lived; so perfect the holy beauty of the maiden as she knelt to await the tiger's leap; so peaceful the sleep of the young boy, beside his wooden cross, as the morn dawned gray on the grim circle where he was to meet his end; so radiant was the old man's countenance as he lifted heavenward his trembling hands out of the flame — that often and often would the bystanders have taken their places, and far more gladly have shared their martyrdom than have sat in guilty glory beside the tyrants who sentenced them to death.

And thus, taking Christ at His word, in spite of every

agony which they were called on to endure, they found His promise true. In losing their lives they found them; by giving up all, they received back more than all.

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To the Christian martyrs to live was Christ, and therefore to die was gain.

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One good thing which the martyrs did for all the world was—they changed the cross of Christ from an emblem of horror and infamy to the proudest of all symbols, to be woven in gold on banners of armies, and set in gems on the crowns of kings. And another grand thing they did was to set the loftiest of all examples; to bear witness to the most necessary of truths—that there is, in life, something better than ease and comfort, more delightful than pleasure, “more golden than gold,” that the life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment, and that man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth. Such men, as has been well said, “create an epidemic of nobleness.” Men become better and greater from gazing at their example: more ready to do and dare: more willing to lift their eyes out of the mire of selfishness and the dust of anxiety and toil; more brave to try whether they too cannot “scale the toppling crags of duty” and hold converse with these their loftier brethren upon the

Shining tablelands

To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

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Martyrdom is not one but manifold: it is often a battlefield where no clash of earthly combatants is heard; it is often a theatre no wider than a nameless home. Sometimes it is passive endurance; sometimes it is active opposition; sometimes it is the stout declaration of a truth; but it is always a firm belief in the eternal distinctions between right and wrong; an evidence of conviction that there are more evils in life than pain, and poverty, and persecutions; and higher blessings than pleasure, and success and wealth.

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To have the spirit of a martyr—and he who has it will be in the highest sense a martyr—is to be true at all costs to the best and highest things you know.

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Only be true to your God; be true to your Saviour; be true to yourselves, be true to the highest that you know, and you too, each in your measure shall have the high honor of helping forward by your example the cause of God, the cause of good—you, too, shall be Christ's witnesses—you too, shall join the glorious army, and even if you never be called upon to taste the martyr's agony, yet, without resisting unto blood, through the mercy and merit of your Lord and Saviour your hands shall bear the martyr's palm-branch, and your brows shall wear the martyr's crown.

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Not once or twice alone in the world's history has God seemed to make His very best and greatest ser-

had not only one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of them all, but even essentially *one* faith with the English athlete, and the stern Calvinist, and the American Puritan, and the passionate reformer. Faith — faith in the unseen — faith in God, faith in Christ, and that faith leading to infinite self-denial, and working by incessant love, that was the secret of their common holiness, that is the lesson of their common example.

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It is childish arrogance in us to argue what plans are consonant to, and what are derogatory of God's Divine Power and Infinite Wisdom. Seeing that we have not the capacity for understanding that which *is*, it is preposterous in us to argue on any general principles as to what *must* have been — Perfect humility and perfect faith, — a faith in Truth which seems to have the least power in many of the loudest champions of a supposed orthodoxy, — are the first elements of scientific success.

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Faith, — man's trustful acceptance of God's gift, rising to absolute self-surrender, culminating in personal union with Christ, working within him as a spirit of new life.

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Faith, in the range of its Pauline meaning, is both a single act and a progressive principle. As a *single act*, it is the self-surrender of the soul to God, the laying hold of Christ, the sole means whereby we appropriate this reconciling love, in which point of view it may be regarded as the root of the new relation of man to God



in justification and adoption. As a *progressive principle* it is the renewal of the personal life in sanctification, — a preservation of the “righteousness of God” objectively bestowed upon us, in the inward and ever-deepening righteousness of our own life : it is in fact, a new and spiritual life, lived in the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

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If we be true and faithful, then rightly considered, our very trials and sorrows are the proofs and pledges of a better world beyond, and of a time when God shall finish His own work.

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If there be some among you — as are there not? — souls sinful indeed, yet not hard in sin ; souls that fail indeed, yet can, amid their failing, long, and pray, and agonize, and strive to keep ever nearer to the light : — then I say, Have faith in God.

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Have faith in God ; think noble things of God ; be sure that trust in the righteous God means the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

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Faith looks up hopefully to God ; Hope looks forward fearlessly to death.

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Trust thou in God — Is there one of you whom He has not richly blessed ?

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If like Peter, we fix our eyes on Jesus we too may walk triumphantly over the swelling waves of disbelief, and unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt ; but if we turn our eyes away from Him in whom we have believed — if, as is so easy to do, and as we are so much tempted to do, we look rather at the power and fury of those terrible and destructive elements than at Him who can help and save — then we too shall inevitably sink. Oh, if we feel often and often that the water-floods threaten to drown us, and the deep to swallow up the tossed vessel of our Church and Faith, may it again and again be granted us to hear amid the storm and the darkness, and the voices prophesying war, those two sweetest of the Saviour's utterances :

Fear not, only believe.  
It is I. Be not afraid.

\* \* \*

Happy he who in an age which has been described as “destitute of Faith yet terrified at Scepticism” can still say *Manet immota Fides*; happier still is he, to whom having the witness in himself, may be given the high grace of laboring to strengthen the Faith of others.

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If peace cannot be between the children of God on earth ; if men, in their assumed infallibility, will not tolerate one another's inevitably divergent opinions ; let us, at least, try to walk by faith. For all these died in the faith. It was by faith that *Ignatius* faced the lions ;

by faith that *Polycarp* stood unflinching in the flame ; by faith *Antony* lived his twenty years in the mountain cell ; by faith *Benedict* rolled his naked body among the thorns to subdue the lusts of the flesh ; by faith *Fra Angelico* despised the honors of the world ; by faith *Francis* reproduced on the Umbrian hills the life of Christ ; by faith *St. Columban* faced the fierce tyranny of Burgundian kings ; by faith *St. Boniface* hewed down the idol oak ; by faith *Eliot*, and *Judson*, and *Marsden*, and *Heber*, and *Mackenzie*, and *Coleridge Patteson*, and *Allen Gardiner*, and *David Livingstone*, civilized the Indians, converted the heathen, put down the slave-trade, showed us how to do, and dare, and die in their Master's cause ; and even so by faith *we*, too, God helping us, may learn from the *Martyrs* that better is fearful death than shamed life ; from the *Hermits* that the life is more than meat ; from the *Monks* the sacredness of poverty, chastity, and obedience ; from the *Early Franciscans* contempt of gold ; from the *Missionaries* devotion to God's other sheep which are not of this flock. All these died in the faith, having both received the promises, in part, on earth, and seen them afar off in heaven. Let us with them follow Christ our common Lord.

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Little faithfulnesses ; it is all the more necessary for us to contemplate them, because it is not these in general which men venerate or admire. We praise the high—the splendid—the heroic ; we dwell on the great deeds—on the glorious sacrifices . . . But think you those brave men and women sprang, as it

were, full-sized, into their heroic stature? Nay, but, like the gorgeous blossom of the aloe, elaborated through long years of silent and unnoticed growth, so these deeds were but the bright consummate flower borne by lives of quiet, faithful, unrecorded service ; and no one, be sure, has ever greatly done or gloriously dared who has not been familiar with the grand unselfishness of little duties ; who has not offered to God — the daily sacrifice of a contrite heart — the daily discipline of a chastened life.

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Little faithfulnesses are not only the preparation for great ones, but little faithfulnesses are in themselves the great ones. . . . The essential fidelity of the heart is the same whether it be exercised in two mites or in a regal treasury ; the genuine faithfulness of the life is equally beautiful whether it be displayed in governing an empire or in writing an exercise. Observe the striking fact that our Lord does not say “He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in much,” but, “He that *is* faithful in that which *is* least *is* faithful also in much. . . . It has been quaintly said that if God were to send two angels to earth, the one to occupy a throne, and the other to clean a road, they would each regard their employments as equally distinguished and equally happy.

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Heaven's least interests dilate into eternal breadth. Yes, to be a faithful Christian is greater in God's sight than to be a triumphant statesman or a victorious emperor.

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Not to despair of good either for ourselves or for the world; not to acquiesce in evil, whether the world's evil or our own, these alone are grand lessons. For the truest men are they in whose bosoms there burns an inextinguishable hope. The day may set for them into starless night, but still on the dark horizon

Hope, a soaring eagle, burns  
Above the unseen morrow.

Is not this a part at least of St. Paul's meaning when he says that "we are saved by hope?"

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Hope is a lily of the valley which can grow only in the humble hearts where God shall plant it.

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If you be loving justice and mercy, and walking humbly with your God, if you be striving, however faintly, to be true and pure and good, then the lesson of the Ascension is a lesson of Hope. It is a pledge to us of that forgiveness which Christ died to win. You may have fallen very low; the white robes of your baptismal innocence may have contracted many and many a stain; yet ye may be full of hope; "though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove which is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold." For Christ is our Intercessor—For us, in the shining vestures of a stainless life, with the noble sacrifice of His own blood, and the more fragrant incense of His own prayers, has passed on this

day through the blue and Starry Vail of Heaven our great High Priest forever to the throne of His never-ending rule. And therefore when we are summoned to the bar of God's Judgment-seat, we may hope; for the soft rainbow like unto an emerald encircles it, and we have an Intercessor; humble yet unabashed may we stand where the very seraphs must veil their faces with their wings, for He is by our side. . . . Oh, with the thought of an Intercessor such as this, to the skirts of whose garment we may cling and be safe, who will save us from our sins, and hide our shameful nakedness with His own white robe, — oh, with such thoughts as this, is not the lesson of the Ascension, for those who love, for those who try to love their Lord, is it not a lesson of infinite peace and hope?

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Take with you, this one simple thought: that Christ your King, your Saviour, your High Priest, who wears your nature, who knows your temptations, who mourns over your sins, who reads your hearts, is living still, living in Heaven, watching over you with love and hope, drawing you to Himself, turning away your eyes from the bewildering magic, and the crushing disappointment, and the scathing curse of a world that ruins and deceives; searching even at this moment, with love or grief, the thoughts of your very hearts.

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The loss of hope in a human soul is the gathering of the darkness; its increase is the brightening of the dawn. To be robbed of it even in our poor earthly life

is a deep misfortune. For though energy may be possible without it, serenity is not; though duty may be faithfully continued, happiness is gone. But hope in our earthly prospects matters very little, if its eternal treasures be garnered up where man cannot rob us of them.



It was an ancient fancy that if the hues of the rainbow fell on the aspalathus, the flower lost every harsher element, and gained an unwonted fragrancy. Let Hope, like that touch of the rainbow, transform and glorify the saddest and hardest heart of you who at His own Sacrament have felt your Saviour's gracious power. But let your hope not be the evanescent bow which overarches the thunder-cloud, but that steadier iris which gleams above the cataract. "It remained motionless," says one who had been watching such a rainbow, while the gusts and clouds of spray swept furiously across its place, and were dashed against the rock. It looked like a spirit stormy in faith, and steadfast in the midst of the storm of passions sweeping across it, and though it might fade and revive, it clung to the rock as in hope and giving hope. And the very drops which in the whirlwind of their fury seemed as if they would carry all away, were made to revive it, and give it greater beauty." Even so may the bow of Hope span the worst sorrow and tumult of your lives: and may it prove to you to be what Eastern fancy saw in it, — the bright and narrow pathway of just souls to heaven.

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Hope is necessary, because the state in which we live, is but a shadow of the state wherein we shall be. . . . Hope is self-fruit. Here the ship still tosses on the turbid waves, but yet it is held by a sure and steadfast anchor, of which the golden chain passes out of our sight, in that aerial ocean beyond the veil — and the unseen links of that chain are held by the hand of Christ, who has gone before us *There*.

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However severe their afflictions had been, they might rest upon a sure hope. The little boat of their lives was being tossed by many a storm, yet it was moored by an anchor which could never slip its hold. That anchor was not fixed even on the rock of any earthly sea, but the hawser which held it passed out of sight behind the veil of Heaven : and in that heavenly sanctuary One had entered as a forerunner on their behalf.

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I, who believe in a God whose name is Love — I, who rely with all my heart on the “mercy of the Merciful,” — I who put my whole trust and confidence in that living God who is “the Saviour of all men” — I, who think that the key to all the dreadful perplexities of life and death lies in the belief that Christ lived and died — I would rather go to the instinct of the Christian Saint than to the system of the dogmatic theologian ; I would rather accept, as reflecting the mind of God, the broad humanitarian charity, the keen and tender



sensibility of the Christian Poet than the hard logic of the inflexible systematist.

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While life lasts there is possible for any one of us an eternal and glorious Hope. The purple thunderclouds which gather around a sinful path, may dim, indeed, but they cannot wholly obliterate the rainbow which spans their gloom.

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Hope—for though in the physical world there be no forgiveness of sins, in the spiritual world, for the penitent, there is—Where can it be found? In Christ, and in Christ alone. If we find it not in Him, we cannot find it anywhere.

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We believe that God is love, and we look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, as to Him who revealed to us the inmost heart of God towards us.

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The Gospel introduced into the world a new, a glorious, a beneficent conception; the conception of mankind as one great brotherhood bound together by the law of Love.

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There is a Love always over you, which you may reject, but cannot alienate. . . . That Love, that Friend is God in Christ.

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Christian love — the love of man as man. That love is a flame from the Divine flame. Christ rendered it possible when He died as a propitiation for us; it becomes actual when He is Christ in us. When we possess the Light it will certainly shine before men. No one has ever *seen* God; our fellowship with Him is not visible. But it is much nearer, for it is spiritual. He is not only with us, He is *in* us; and therefore His love, in all its perfection, dwells within us, proving its existence by continuous love to all our brethren, whether in the church or in the world.

\* \* \*

Scripture no where says, "God is justice;" it does say "God is Love." Because He is love, and not mere inexorable justice. "He will not deal with us after our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities." "Love is not like some white lily lying on a dark expanse of justice; no mere "flower hung upon a pillar cold and dark as stone." Love is the principle, not the palliation.

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The intensity of God's love for man, which is the very essence of the Gospel message. That love is not quenched by our sinfulness, but only mingled with grief.

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A man's duty is wider than a care for the salvation of his individual soul: even in matters of religion

selfishness must be excluded — love to our neighbor is ever mingled with — and is the appointed way of manifesting — our love to God.

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It is not gold or silver; it is not land or houses; it is not a flourishing business or hoarded funds that constitute true riches. . . . The true riches are health, and a pure heart, and love of Christ, and love to man, and perfect trust in the sustaining providence of God, and a cheerful spirit; and a noble charity.

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God is love, His purpose is love; if many of us are lost, He sent His Son to seek and to save His lost; if His sheep wander into the wilderness, the Good Shepherd in the Parable searches for His sheep, until He finds them. Why? because He grieves over human sin, and pities human misery. And therefore to remedy evil, to strive for good, — not to neglect the little daily duties and beneficences of life, the gracious acts, the tender courtesies, the tolerant appreciations, the public magnanimities, the social efforts, the rational aims of nobler manhood, either in selfish absorption in the effort to save our own souls, or in fury against others because they will not save their souls in our way, — in one word to love God and our neighbor, and to believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He gave us commandment — this is to live as Christ lived on earth.

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It is the property of love to bind us closely to that which we love; if we love the earth we are earthy; the love of God makes us divine.

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Fear may create the enforced obedience of the slave; love only can win the devotion of the child, and that is why God hath not sent to us—who know the truth and whom the truth has made free—the spirit of fear and bondage, but of love, and of power and of a sound mind. And this love is the sole eternal basis of holiness.

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The true motive of all holiness—Christ's redemption—God's love.

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The love which Christ taught, was not a love inspired by individual prudence, but destined for social use.

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Love—"thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love the test and condition of discipleship. . . . Love is greater than even Faith or Hope, Love is the fulfilling of the law.

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Thus did Love unseal by a single touch those swelling fountains of penitence which contempt would have kept closed forever!

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Christ came to love, as none had ever loved, those whom none had ever loved as yet. He was the protector of children, the healer of the sick, the friend of the sinful, the teacher of the ignorant, the seeker of the wandering, the Saviour of the lost.

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God is love : — and what He wants of us is neither metaphysical theology, nor elaborate ritual, nor ascetic practices, but love to Him our Father in Christ Jesus, and love for His sake to our brother man.

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God loves us, sinners though we be. Christ died to save us from our sins. We are not asked to reason, but to accept a loving Saviour, and yield ourselves to a loving will. . . . “We are more than conquerors through Christ that loved us.”

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Brotherly Love is a proof that we belong to the kingdom of Eternal Reality.

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Let us live in love, lest we blush with burning shame, to find that God honors, and the Lamb of God receives into His bosom, those whom we coldly neglected or wickedly despised.

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To believe, and to love — these two commandments form the summary of *all* God's commandments, for one

is the inward spirit of obedience, the other its outward form. He who thus keeps God's commandments abides in God, and God in him.

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In the thought of God's infinite Love, lies the gleam of light in the saddest destinies, or the most perplexed enigmas of the individual.

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To be true and to be loving is the secret of Christian growth.

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They loved God, and they did all the good they could to those around them. . . . Religion was not a system, but a habit, not a theory, but a continued act of life.

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"A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.' And he divided unto them his living." We are those children, and to us does God our Father divide His gracious and glorious gifts. To all of us He gives this earth, with its daily miracles of beauty and power; to all of us the sunrise and the sunset, the flowers and the dew of heaven, the mountains and rivers, the sky and fields. To all of us the healthy airs of day and the soft sleep of night; . . . to each of us the perfect round of life's changing seasons, and the sweet mystery of death, and the hope of heaven beyond. And to *you* many precious and special gifts; the glories of living, the inestimable gem of Time;—

strength of arm, advantage of position, power of mind. These are God's talents; the inheritance He divides among us at our birth. He gives them to us,—for what purpose? To bury, or hide, or squander them in self-seeking, in self-indulgence, for self-glory? Nay, not so! They are His, not ours; given, not earned; nay, rather lent, not given—lent us for His service, to be used for His glory with contentedness, with industry, with love.

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Live not in the present only, but provide for the future too. Vigour and strength, and other physical gifts may be an innocent, nay, a glorious crown around the brows of manhood; but they can never be so if they are sought exclusively, if they are not united to other and better things.

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To every living being our Father in Heaven has given something which shall enable him to maintain his happiness and his self-respect, in short, to hold his own among his fellow-men. One has a noble body, another a keen intellect . . . each may find in the other something to imitate, something to respect; and oh! that each honored each, and helped each; for all are brethren; all sons of the same Father; all sheep of a common fold.

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Each day, each week, each month, each year is a new chance given you by God. A new chance, a new leaf, a new life—this is the golden, the unspeakable gift which each new day offers to you.

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If God for our good see fit to deny us all else, may He, as His best gift of all, grant us this, to be of some real, of some deep use to our fellow-men, before we go hence and are no more seen.

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All gifts, even the spontaneous gifts of Heaven, are like the fairy gold that turns to dust. It is God who weaves the little thread of our destinies, and He means it for our best happiness, unless our rude folly mars His plan.

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Eloquence is not a thing for which we can give a receipt as one might give a receipt for making eau-de-Cologne. Eloquence is the noble, the harmonious, the passionate expression of truths profoundly realized, or of emotions intensely felt. It is a flame which cannot be kindled by artificial means. *Rhetoric* may be taught if any one thinks it worth learning; but *eloquence* is a *gift* as innate as the genius from which it springs.

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To enable us to enjoy the gifts of nature, we all need more open eyes, more grateful hearts.

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It is not happiness, but it is something higher than happiness; it is stillness, it is assurance, it is satisfaction, it is peace; the world can neither understand it, nor give it, nor take it away,—it is something indescribable—it is the gift of God.



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The whole system of life is full of divine and memorable compensations. . . . God kindles the light of genius where He will, and He can inspire the highest and the most regal thoughts even in the meanest slave.

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To seek for knowledge where it is possible is the clear duty of man : to win it is the gift of God.

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The full, rich innocent use of gifts and opportunities —how little do we understand it! For every purpose of noble gladness, how much more might almost every one of us make of our life than we do!

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All things end in a mystery, and all mysteries resolve themselves into one — the existence of evil. But, happily, this mystery need in no way oppress us, for it is lost in the Plentitude of God.

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That element of strength — God's blessing sought in prayer — is a mightier buttress than the labors of nations who toiled for centuries at the houses of pride, or the haunts of pleasures, the palaces of Nineveh, and the hanging gardens of Semiramis.

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Prayer and a holy life must be his who would see his Maker. In prayer you grasp the golden key of the gate of Eden ; by a holy life, you may walk in something

more than fancy, among its seraph choir. It was for rebels only that the avenue to Paradise was closed. For him who approacheth it with prayer and holiness the cherubim veil their wrathful faces, and the waving blade of the flaming sword is sheathed.

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Herein lies the great mercy and love of God, that we may go to Him in our agony even if we have never gone before. Oh, if prayer were possible only for those who have never forsaken or forgotten God, if it were not possible for sinners and penitents and those who have gone astray, — then of how infinitely less significance would it be for sinful and fallen man!

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Be prayerful and you will be happy, and innocent and noble too. What your prayers are you will be. O my brethren, with deep earnestness would I urge you to pray, — habitually, reverently, trustfully to pray to your heavenly Father, — and never to rise from your knees until you feel that you rise victorious, and that you too have been saying to God in the heartfelt purpose which gave might to the olden Patriarch, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.”

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Prayer — God’s blessed permission to us, to see Him and to know Him, and to trust Him — *that* is granted us not for the hours of death or agony alone, but for all life. . . . And it is a gift no less priceless for its alleviation of sorrow than for its intensification of all innocent joy. For him who would live a true life it

is as necessary in prosperity as in adversity, — in peace as in trouble — in youth as in old age.

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Prayer may recall the sunshine even to the dark and frozen heart, — there is no long winter, there is no unbroken night, on which the Sun of Righteousness has not risen with healing in His wings, . . . because true prayer is always heard.

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If we pray for any earthly blessing we must pray for it solely “if it be God’s will,” “if it be for our highest good;” but for all the best things we may pray without misgiving, without reservation, certain that if we ask God will grant them. Nay even in asking for them we may know that we have them, — for what we desire we ask, and what we ask we aim at, and what we aim at we shall attain. No man ever yet asked to be, as the days pass by, more and more noble, and sweet, and pure, and heavenly-minded, no man ever yet prayed that the evil spirits of hatred, and pride, and passion, and worldliness might be cast out of his soul, — without his petition being granted and granted to the letter.

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If you know God, or rather are known of Him, you will need no proof that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and you will not be troubled by the scepticism of philosophers. O let us get near to God by faith and prayer, and we shall break with one of our fingers through the brain-spun

meshes of these impotent negations. Prove to us that by the word "God" we ought only to mean "vortices of atoms," or "streams of tendency" and at the end of such triumphant demonstrations, we shall but kneel down before Him who made us, and not we ourselves, and with bowed head, and sad yet kindling heart, shall pray, if possible with yet deeper conviction, "Our Father which art in Heaven," and when we thus believe in Him whom we have not seen, all else follows.

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Prayer is the truest amulet against the siren songs, the holiest enchantment against each Circean spell.

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It is not difficult for anyone to walk in God's ways, who, from childhood upwards, has lived in the light of his earliest prayers—with how few, alas, is this the case!

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If our heart condemns us not of wilful failure in general obedience or in brotherly love. . . . then we have that confidence of which St. John spoke—and are also sure that God will grant our prayers, both personal, that we may ever know and do the thing which is right—and intercessory—that His love may be poured forth on our brethren also.

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If our minds are filled, if our lives are actuated by Brotherly love, if our fellowship with God be of necessity fellowship with one another—our prayers will con-

stantly be occupied with our brethren; they will to a large extent be intercessory prayers.

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As regards prayer in general, when a Christian prays he knows that God listens, and he therefore has what he has asked for. He has it even if the prayer be denied, for his prayer is not absolutely that which is contingent may happen; but that God will give him the true and best answer by making the will of the petitioner to be one with His.

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Between us and that glorified Redeemer who now sitteth at the right hand of God — the cloud still rolls. But the eye of faith can pierce it: the incense of true prayer can rise above it, through it the dew of blessing can descend.

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The Lord's Prayer — the pearl of prayers.

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The secret of successful prayer — is faith: the road to faith in God lays through pardon of transgression; pardon is possible to those alone who are ready to pardon others.

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Prayer, effort, watchfulness, penitence for past sin, efforts to aid the souls of others, these are the means of grace which are like fresh oil and fragrant in the lighted lamp of a Christian's soul.

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Oh, court earnestly the best gifts and you shall have them, ask in faith, nothing doubting, and do your duty while you ask. . . . Dost thou love uprightness? Ask it, *will* it, and thou shalt be upright.

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Solomon had asked for wisdom, and God gave him besides riches, and long life and victorious success. And why was Solomon's prayer so acceptable to God? First because to Him any true and faithful prayer is so acceptable, and next because of all prayers He loveth best those that are wholly unselfish, those in whom all thoughts of self are absorbed and annihilated in thoughts of Him and of our fellow men.

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God will not listen to a prayer that is not a prayer!

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When the eyes are opened by prayer and penitence, when the ear is purged by listening humbly for the revelation of His will, then all life, all history are full of Him.

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How shall we become better? Only by lifting our eyes towards the hills, whence cometh our help, only through the third Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, who sanctifieth, who is sanctifying us. . . . He is the Paraclete — ever willing and ready to help us to realize the great ideal. If we truly seek it, He will

inspire our prayers to attain it; He will answer those prayers Himself.

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Ah, it is a great thing, it is "a far cry" to most of us, to be merely good men, victors of our spiritual enemies, victors of ourselves.

"It is hard," said the ancient thinker, "a hard struggle, and not so easy as it seems, to become good." He was right. It is a hard thing, and there are thousands of us, it may be, of whom as yet, God asks nothing more.

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Sure I am that all which was good and holy in by-gone ideals of self-devotion may be perpetuated in the best forms of goodness which are possible to-day. It needed not the stake or the Tullianum to make the Martyr, but the intense consecration that he who lost his life for Christ's sake should find it. It was not the cavern and the desert which constituted the Hermit's virtue, but the spirit of "interior solitude," and the belief that the life was more than meat, the body more than raiment. It was not from the tonsure and the scapulary that the Monk derived his usefulness, but from that determinate self-conquest which sprang from his sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There was no merit in the sandals and girdle of the Franciscan, but in his utter superiority to the allurements of the world. And all these lessons have come down as a heritage to age after age.

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When God in bad times has good soldiers, he places them in the thick of the battle, and they have fallen under a monument of darts. Near Him, they have been near the fire. For them as for the old Moslem, "Paradise has been prefigured under the shadow of the crossing scimitars." See how they have sunk to the ground with bleeding feet on the world's highway, whereon often till death they have walked well-nigh alone! But what happens? — They have never failed; they have startled the deep slumber of false opinions; they have thrilled a pang of noble shame through callous consciences; they become magnetic. Into the next age, if not their own, they flash an epidemic of nobleness.

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It is with good men as with evil. Evil as we know to our cost, attracts by its sympathies, and those who have been once overcome by it, add, alas! even unconsciously to its power of attraction. Just so every spark, however small, has its effect, and glows, and gleams, and involves a danger of a possibility of conflagration; even so a spark of evil in the heart of a fellow-man betrays itself to us through the mere power of its existence, and can even without words make itself intelligible. Well! so it is also, thank God, with good.

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If Abraham Lincoln was not great by genius he was something more: he was great by exalted goodness. Never, perhaps, did a simpler, a sweeter, a homelier



nature, shape the decrees of a great people ; never, certainly, did a leading ruler depend with so steady and entire a humility on God, or feel with deeper purity, and avow with manlier courage, that he was but a weak instrument for the purpose of the Almighty. He was a truly good man ; — a man who encircled with temptations, yet lived without avarice and without ambition : — a man who, while others blustered, never uttered one boastful sentence, and while others raved, never penned one vindictive word : — a man whose very face, they say, in his last days was illuminated with the hopes of peace and the power of mercy : — a man whom misfortune did not depress, nor success unduly elate —

A good man struggling with the storm of fate!

Through good report and through ill report calmly, humbly, hopefully bearing up, and doing his manful duty to the bitter end.

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The lustre of the planets may be faint and poor, but yet it is reflected from the common sun ; and so the goodness of a redeemed man, however pale in lustre, is still sacred because it is a reflection from the Sun of Righteousness. The reflected light of morality is nothing apart from the splendour of that religion from which it is derived.

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“To do good, and to communicate forget not” — It was the sublimest originality of the character of Christ

to go about doing good, *we* know it to be so, and the opportunities of doing so are constantly granted us.

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To *do* good, we must *be* good. When any one is a truly good man, then even if he takes no part whatever in holy wars against the sin of the world, his mere unconscious influence, his mere passive character becomes a blessing to others, and without any conscious endeavor he still drops his little quota into the stream of the world's improvement. About the mere presence and person of good men there hangs a charm and spell of good which makes them do good, even when they are not consciously thinking of good. Their very face does good, as though it were the face of an angel, and from their mere silence there spreads an influence — a “flowing in” — of higher motives, and purer thoughts into the souls of men.

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If we would do as Jesus did, we must be His servants. If we would help to heal the evils of the world we must ourselves be free from them. If we would tend the plague-stricken, there must not be the plague in our own hearts. We must be consistent, and give proofs of our consistency.

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It is the best commentary on that epitome of His life which presents it to us in its most splendid originality — that “He went about doing good.” It is the point which the rarest and noblest of His followers have found it most difficult to imitate. It is the point in

which His life transcended most absolutely the ideal of the attainments of the very greatest of His forerunners. The seclusion of the hermit, the self-renunciation of the ascetic, the rapture of the mystic — all these are easier and more common than the unwearied toil of a self-renouncing love.

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Remember that if the opportunity for *great* deeds should never come, the opportunity for *good* deeds is renewed for you day by day. The thing for us to long for is the goodness, not the glory.

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The only real, the only permanent, the only essential greatness open to man is that of duty and of goodness: and that is as open, is as free, is as possible to any man as the sunlight that shines on us, or as the sweet air we breathe.

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The yesterdays of life are ever the parents of its to-morrows.

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O reverence and use aright the hours which as they perish are imparted to you. Regard each new day as a fresh unstained gift from God, and wrestling with it earnestly from its earliest dawn, say to it, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me."

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For what cause is it that God gives us the gift of time, if it be not that we may repent therein?

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Time is not lost, if God demanded it in illness for His own good purpose.

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To the eye of God all Time is but one eternal Present, "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

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Little by little, irrevocable Time flows on ; the twenty-fours hours of the day seem a long time, and yet it is the second hand that does it ; it is all traversed, as has been well said, by tiniest tickings of the clock. And life is but a day like this, and the days are its seconds, and the terms its hours : and the morning of its boyhood, and its manhood's noon, soon merge, merge insensibly, into the chill gray evening and darkened close.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time:  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death.

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Every day — we might almost say every hour, every moment of our mortal life has its own importance ; for on any day of it death may come, and on any hour of it eternity may hang. But these days and hours are most important of all, because on them so many future days and hours may depend ; because the whole oak lies in the acorn : because fruit is seed.

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Each *moment* is an opportunity, and if, as the old sundial says, *Ex hoc momento pendit æternitas* what an opportunity, what a mass of opportunities must each day be!

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That awful mystery of Time — the Future not to be anticipated, the Past not to be recalled, only the Present ours; and that Present, what is it? An island ever encroached upon by the dark and swelling waves — a quicksand which ever swallows the place where last we trod — the flowing water of a river which is already far upon its way to the great sea. Even while we speak, it was and is not. Forever — never. It passes away with every ticking of the clock, with every beating of the heart, with every breath of articulated air. Yet how priceless! In it alone we live. . . . It perishes and is recorded. And though we waste — nay, waste is a slight word — though we abuse, fling away, squander, kill it now, may not the hour come to us as to the great English Queen crying in her deathbed agony — “Oceans of money, for one drop of time.”

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On this mysterious sea of Time there is no rest, no retrogression. As wave after wave ripples past us, as mile after mile of water rushes by, they are gone, gone forever, beyond the power of even Omnipotence to recall. The memory of those past days may be as a halcyon calming them under its brooding plumes, or like the petrel hurrying over them with the prophecy of storm;

they may have been traversed in a direction straight for Heaven, or they may be separating us more and more widely from the haven where we would be — but they are ours no longer; they belong to eternity: they belong to God: they have glided into the dark backward, they have been swallowed up in the unknown abysm. These years that are past where are they?

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Yesterday is yours no longer: to-morrow may be never yours; but to-day is yours, the living present yours, and in the living present you may stretch forward to the things that are before.

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To many the resurrection from the death of sin is a slow process: but others pass with one thrill of conviction, with one spasm of energy, from death to life, from the power of Satan unto God. Such moments crowd eternity into an hour, and stretch an hour into eternity.

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Look at the mountain-ash. Early in summer it clothes itself in its delicate and odorous flowers: and when these fall, for a time it has nothing but leaf to show; but look at it again in autumn, and then, "decorated from outmost fringe to topmost pinnacle," it is one pyramid of glowing scarlet. That brilliant fruitage of its maturity is nothing in the world but the refined blossom of its youth. Be you like the mountain-ash. Gather when young, and you shall possess when old the riches of knowledge and of wisdom. Not this alone, but the mere act of gathering, the mere grandeur

of a pure and spiritual idea, the mere effect of *time* duly appreciated and wisely used, shall save you from a thousand remorseful memories and vague regrets—shall help you to be in God's sight sober-minded.

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Reverence yourselves in reverencing the high and merciful commands of God. Even if Christianity were not, if man had nothing to guide him but the dim gleam of tradition, or the smouldering torch of an unilluminated reason,—even then there should be in him “Such an honest haughtiness of nature,” so ingenuous and noble a sense of shame, as should make him scorn to sell his high birthright of honorable instincts for the mess of miserable pottage which sin alone can offer, as should enable him, as indeed has often been the case, to sit

Self-governed, in the fiery prime of youth,  
Obedient at the foot of law.

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You are the brethren of Christ, the sons of God; the dignity of His image and likeness is upon you; the sign of His cross upon your brows. Your bodies are His holy temple, your hearts the altar on which He has kindled the fire of His love. You hear His word, you receive His sacraments. You are called by His high calling to be holy and pure. The glory of your adoption, the inestimable price paid for your redemption, the ennobling mystery of sanctification, have made you more sacred than a dedicated thing. There is nothing high, there is nothing noble, there is nothing godlike to which you are not clearly summoned; for which you

are not naturally fit. And shall *you* descend voluntarily into the defilement and pollution of sin? Nay, reverence yourselves, for you are greater than you know. Oh, surely when you think of the high and holy men, the household and city of God on earth; or when, yet passing upwards, you mingle in thought with the spirits and souls of the righteous, in those —

Solemn choirs and sweet societies  
That sing, and singing in their glory move;—

or when, soaring yet higher on the wings of solemn and consecrated thought you fix your contemplations on the Father who created you, on the Spirit who sheds His light abroad in your hearts, on the great High Priest who stands to intercede for you by the throne of the Majesty on high;—surely in the light of such thoughts, the philosophy which jests at sin, and the worldly wisdom which bids you descend from the sunlight of holy contemplation to fill your belly with the husks that the swine do eat, — surely, I say, in the light of such contemplations, the rank theories of the worldling and the sensualist become hideous and revolting. So may they ever seem, not for the condemnation of others, but for the ennoblement of ourselves. So may they ever seem to us, till our lives are worthy of the holy name whereby we are called. Wholly worthy in this life they cannot be; but by God's grace they shall be hereafter, when in that city into which can enter no evil, no abominable thing, He who hath loved us, and purchased us to Himself with His own blood, shall clothe our sinful souls in the white robe of His



righteousness, and confess our names before His Father, and before the angels.

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It is wiser to think of our possible exaltation than of our actual fall. It is better to bear in mind the glory we might bear with us, and the divine altar from whose brightness the flame of our souls was lit, than to conceive of ourselves as a mean, a worthless, and a ruined herd ;— it is better with David to lift up our eyes, undaunted, even to the starry vault of heaven, and to believe that on the very throne of the Omnipotent is the likeness of a human form, than to regard ourselves with the diseased and anguished Job, as the valueless playthings of a divine irony, and the scorned slaves of an unmerciful decree. For as our thoughts are we shall be ; and if they are fixed on glory and immortality, with Christ in heavenly places, there is more hope that we too shall in heart and mind thither ascend. Oh reverence yourselves, encourage in yourselves, not as a feeling of pride, since it crushes all pride and annihilates a conceited self-satisfaction into a divine and modest humility, but, as an incentive to all purity and to all praise, cherish in yourselves that thought of your exalted origin from God, and of that lofty destiny which may lead you through the grave and gate of death, to stand undazzled before His throne.

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Read legibly emblazoned in the heraldry of the soul, the proofs of its glorious genealogy, and the right to rise far above the interests of earth ; claim fearlessly

your great privilege as the children of a king, claim it as your talisman against all weakness and all degradation, till your lives catch something of that glory which is visible in the example of Him who redeemed them, as the face of Moses shone with a divine and dazzling luster as he returned down the flaming mountain from high communings with his Father and his God.

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Let Him, our Lord, our Hope, our Saviour — let Him be our ideal, and not the ideal of the world; let His, and not the example of the world, be our example: so shall we attain the full height of our destiny, so shall we, partakers of His redemption, and heirs of His immortality, after a godly life here live with God hereafter, the tears wiped from our faces, the scars of sin and sorrow healed in our souls, not a little lower, but higher than the angels, crowned with a glory and honour which can never fade or be dimmed again, and with Death itself, the last of all our enemies, vanquished and crushed beneath our feet.

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What is man? The true answer, “a little lower than God, crowned with glory and honour,” came but in part to David under that starlit sky; it came with fuller assurance, it came with a Symphony of louder, more triumphant, more immortal exultation, not to a crowned king, but, one thousand years after, to humble shepherds under another starlit sky, keeping watch over their flocks by night. For they were told by the angel-voices that the God-man was born; oh, if you

would see the ideal of manhood, look to Him ; care fretted Him not, for that Lamb of God lived from childhood in the green pastures and beside the still waters of His Father's love ; worldliness debased Him not, for He despised the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them when they lay outspread in their dazzling glory before His feet ; passion never assaulted Him, for it is only the meanest souls that passion long enslaves. But though he felt not the yoke of these temptations, He saw them in others, and with a divine pity pitied them.

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O let us thank God that He has taught us to reverence ourselves ; let us thank God that in His sight all are equally great, all equally little.

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Purity, self-devotion, courage, as they were the knight's main duties, so are they yours ; the chrismal fire of the sevenfold blessings is shed no less richly on you than upon him ; his armour was but the symbol of your panoply of God ; his foes but the embodied representations of the powers which assault and hurt your soul. You too are following Christ to the gathering battle ; you too are riding forth in the hope that He will make you more than conquerors. For the moment you have felt as though all things were possible to you, and all things *are* possible through Christ who loves you ; and, to the faintest-hearted of you, victory is certain if you fight under your Captain's banner, and in the strength which Christ will give.



If any knight in legend or in reality,—if any Christian hero in history or in life,—did great and worthy deeds, what influences have sustained him? what perpetual incense has kept the fire of God's love burning upon the altar of his heart?—Whence did a Percivale or a Galahad,—whence did a Luther or a Milton,—whence did a Whitfield or a Martyn, win the mighty inspiration which made their lives so true, their swords so irresistible, their hearts so noble, their words so strong? Not assuredly in the Circean philosophy of the world, not in the foolishness of darkened imaginations, which make a mock at sin,—nay, but in the stern school of self-denial, under the hardy discipline of laborious duty. . . .

“Lift up your hearts,” was the voice that ever sounded in their ears; “We lift them up unto the Lord,” was always the fervent antiphon of their faithful hearts. “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are of good report,”—they thought on those things. And you must think upon them, too, and on the heavenly sunbeams of such thoughts must climb to the Father of Lights, who dwelleth in the Light unapproachable. With souls so inspired you may hope indeed; hope not only that you may ever shrink from the coarser and viler temptations of the world, as from the burning ashes that have been fed by the corpses of the slain,—hope not only that you may triumph over the subtler temptations of sloth, and cowardice, and

spiritual pride, — but hope that you will by God's blessing be enabled to lead a life far higher and more heroic than the vulgar and sleepy standard of the so-called religious world, — that God's grace may inspire you with such a passion for integrity and truth, that you too, may be hereafter among those saints of God who have inspired the souls of others by the conspicuous example of Christ-like lives.

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Believe in God's love, and you like many another wounded soldier, shall yet win the battle. To say, "I cannot" in matters of daily duty is weak and feeble; to say it of spiritual duties is blasphemy and death. It is blasphemy, for it charges God with sins which you pretend to be unavoidable; it is death, because it is the inevitable prelude to self-abandonment and to despair.

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Lowest of all men are they who live only to gratify their senses . . . highest of all they who live in the faith of eternal thoughts and are ready to pour out their very lives as a sacrifice, if so they may inspire others with the same holy and everlasting faith.

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None — not even the oldest warrior — can ever in this world lay aside one piece of his panoply; for our warfare is a warfare in which there is no discharge.

. . . If you be at ease, if you be living in pride, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness, the foes of your spiritual being may have abandoned the semblance

of battle, only because they are secure in the confidence of victory. But oh, if you would escape them, *Watch*.

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Beware lest in a moment of weakness, and folly, and sinful forgetfulness of God, you sell your birthright, and barter your happy innocence for torment, and fear, and shame. Beware of idle moments. Beware of the beginnings of evil. Above all, and more than all, beware lest you once admit the fatal intrusion of evil thoughts. In solemn and awful earnest I would say to you, — Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

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When the finger of God has pointed out the path to a noble soul, it will not swerve either to the right hand or to the left.

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Let us beware that in us unholiness do not cloud the spiritual eye, and dull the spiritual ear: for the rank mists which reek upward from the sinful heart *do* tend most fatally to obliterate the Image, the Memory, the Life of Christ — they end by hiding from the human soul even the vision of its Creator in fold on fold of a more and more impenetrable night.

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Worldliness may chain us to its trough. . . .  
But, believe me,— God has not made it difficult for the simple and manly heart to put a curb on evil passions: if you will remember the lessons learnt at your mother's knee, if you will turn with pity and abhorrence from

the conversations of the corrupt and base, if you will regard with loathing and anguish the thought of degrading yourselves, whose mortal bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, it is not difficult for any one to live, with a white and unstained soul from happy boyhood to noble youth, from noble youth to Godlike manhood.

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We may hate lies and abhor them : but depend upon it, only by God's grace and our own careful watchfulness are any of us safe from anything.

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Of worldliness I accept no such cheap and vulgar definition as that which makes it consist in going to races, and theatres, and balls. No, I mean something infinitely deeper than this. I mean living for what is temporal, and not for what is eternal, a crime of which not the publicans only, but many a sleek Pharisee is guilty. To live as thousands live, vainly it would seem to store up their little dross, slowly or quickly to scrape themselves up a competence and leave the rest of their substance to their babes, to join in the race for wealth, to live without public spirit, without love to man, with no care but for our own selfish comforts, grandeurs, or interests, to take the print of a mammon-worshipping age, and so to live dismal, illiberal, acquisitive lives, is a terrible danger to us all. And oh, what a great blank of the soul comes upon the man who accepts this life ; how all the ardors of his early enthusiasm die away ; how all that was fair, and delicate, and noble, and attractive about him, all artless simplicity, all the ten-

derness, all the romance, all the chivalry, all the poetry of his existence gets congealed and hardened into conceit and commonplace; . . . The rust and the canker eat away all of the little soul that is left, and the scurf of a heartless conventionality lies thick all over the daily life.

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I envy you not the greatest wealth, I envy you not the highest rank. . . . They may be a splendid boon; they may be a fatal curse. If they are to make a narrow life span the horizon of your hopes, and the turbid world yield you the only joys for which you care, if they are to make you lounge through an idle or fashionable life in the dull rounds of insipid pleasures and satiating excitements, if they are to make you turn your attention to dress, and equipages, and servants, and the heavy adjuncts of a vulgar display, then for my own part, sooner than change with you, I had rather be the meanest Christian workman on whose brow the sweatdrops must stand thick, each day, ere he can earn his daily bread: I had rather be the most poor and toilworn fisherman, who draws his precarious food from the troubled waters, and whose shipwrecked boat and drowned corpse are at last flung up without pity, like a plaything of which the waves are tired, high upon the hungry and stony beach. Nay even as a matter of this world's life, I believe that so I should be happier than you in a life of eating, and drinking, and dressing, and hunting, and doing nothing. I should at least have the bright eye of health, and the brawny arm of strength, and the fearless heart of independence, and the daunt



less brow of honest innocence, and the home unvulgarized by useless conventionalities and joyless joys, and the simple, unsophisticated, unsated heart, the well-spring of truthfulness and peace. But how much more, if I add to these the hopes which the worldly life loses for ever? I would not sell one, the smallest, of these hopes, for the brightest coronet or the stateliest castle you could give me. I would say, as a happy and high-minded writer of this age has said of them, "Lord, lead me on — my hopes; I know that ye are true and not vain. Vanish from my eyes day after day, but arise in new forms. I will follow your holy deception; follow till ye have brought me to the feet of my Father in Heaven, where I shall find you all with folded wings, spangling the sapphire dusk, whereon stands His throne, which is our Home."



Our path in life is like that of the traveller who lands at the famous port of the Holy Land. He rides at first under the shade of palms, under the golden orange-groves, beside the crowded fountains, with almonds and pomegranates breaking around him into blossom; soon he leaves behind him these lovely groves: he enters on the bare and open plain; the sun burns over him, the dust-clouds whirl around him; but even there the path is bordered by the quiet wayside flowers, and when at last the bleak bare hills succeed, his heart bounds within him, for he knows that he shall catch his first glimpse of the Holy City, as he stands weary on their brow. Oh how often must the Christian in this the Holy Land of his short pilgrimage on earth,

from the golden morning to the blaze of noon, from the burning noon to the beautiful twilight, again and again recall that tender verse of the prophets, "I know the thoughts that I think towards you," saith the Lord, "*thoughts of peace and not of evil.*"

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The path of life is narrow and uphillward, and unless Heaven's light fall on it one false step may be irretrievable. Wary walking therefore, — as wise, not as unwise, — is essential to our safety.

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We are voyagers on a broad sea ; some of you as yet have had but little experience save of cloudless skies above you, and the rippling of white foam about the bows ; the wind plays with the streamer and swells the sail ; and under the sunlight the waves before you are flashing into gold. But others of us are farther on our way . . . we know that on that great sea there are sunken reefs and iron shores ; we know that of the ships which traverse it, some, alas, founder in the billows, and others split upon the rocks :

And where a home hath he  
Whose ship is driving on the driving sea ?  
To the frail bark now plunging on its way,  
To the wild water shall he turn and say  
To the plunging bark or to the salt sea-foam,  
You are my home ?

Ah no ! my brethren, the true home for us lies beyond those waters, and oh, the rudder needs a firm

hand, and the voyager a stout heart, for though short it is often perilous, and always onward. So then, whatever our voyage may hitherto have been when we have gazed from the stern together on the shores that fade behind us — and afterwards as we turn away again to look on the misty uncertainties of all that may assist us in our future course, let us pray that touching prayer of the Breton mariners, “Save us, oh God! Thine ocean is so large, and our little boat so small.”

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Life is but one passing “now,” until with one last “*now!*” like a clap of thunder, the hour of judgment comes.

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The life of all is a race. . . . Let us try to help each other, for we are brothers in the great family of God. Let us strive in earnest for the reward is infinite. Let us keep an eye upon the hope set before us, without which our life must be a failure to ourselves. . . . In the race of life itself, in which nothing can save you from shame and sorrow, but energy, prudence, temperance, self-denial, self-purification, singleness of aim; in the race of your Christian calling on which depends not only the happiness, the nobleness, the purity of your lives, but even the safety of your immortal souls; — be strong, be earnest, be sincere. The stadium may be long or short — but the exceeding immortality — “the dateless and irrevocable circles of eternity” — is for all who can say “I have finished my race, I have kept the faith.”

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Life, it is true, is a struggle of conflicting elements, a contest of opposite tendencies, a law in the members warring against the law of the mind. Reason and temptation, duty and impulse, right and wrong are ever striving for the mastery in the battle-field of the human heart.

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The ocean of life is large, and thy little boat is small, and there has been many and many a terrible and disastrous shipwreck on those rough waves ; but though the great winds blow, and the angry billows roll, God shall keep fast thy feeble hand upon the guiding helm, and thou shalt reach the safe haven where thou would'st be, and out of the gossamer threads of thy weak and wavering will, He will forge the iron cables which shall moor thee safe to that everlasting Hope, which is an anchor of the soul.

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Yes, life is a game ; a complicated game ; a difficult game : a game which requires wisdom, diligence, patience ; a game of which you must learn the conditions, a game which will try your powers ; a game in which there is not one good quality of head or heart that will not greatly help you ; a game of which the forfeits are terrible, of which the issues are infinite. "It has been played for untold ages, and every one of us is one of the players in it." The rules of it have been made independently of us, but they are absolute, and we must obey them. Those rules are the laws of nature, the

laws of health, the laws of intellect, above all the moral laws of God. . . . Obey them, — and by prayer and the grace which your Saviour will give you — you *can* obey them, — and you must and will find peace unto your souls. Disobey them, and you make of life a misery, and of death a ruin. But there is one respect in which the game of life differs from our earthly games. In these there is always an element of chance; in the game of life there is none. He who keeps the high and simple rules of it must win. Fools may think his life madness, and his end to be without honour; but he has won, and more than won, for he is counted among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints. . . . “He has done his best!” and upwards, and ever upwards, peals even to the glimmering summit the glad answer “He has done his best!”

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We have plucked the bitter fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of evil, yet the Tree of Life still stands in the garden of God, and it was a legend of deep meaning which told that a seed of that tree was brought to Adam, and that from it sprang that other Tree of Life from which the Cross was made. . . .

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If we be Christians at all, we are all joining, or trying to join in the one great Psalm of life. . . . Oh that our lives might add to the melody!

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Ask the Christian, “Is life worth living?” and he will answer, “Ay, life is infinitely worth living, and

death is even infinitely more worth dying ; for to live is Christ, and to die is gain ; to live is to have faith in God, and to die is to be with Him for evermore.

Death is the veil which they who live call life;  
We sleep and it is lifted.

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It is possible so to live in obedience to the law of God, that life, even amid its sin and suffering may still echo with the distant songs of a lost Paradise.

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A life regardful of duty is crowned with an object, directed by a purpose, inspired by an enthusiasm, till the very humblest routine, carried out conscientiously for the sake of God, is elevated into moral grandeur : and the very obscurest office, filled conscientiously at the bidding of God, becomes an imperial stage on which all the virtues play. To one who lives thus the insignificant becomes important, the unpleasant delightful, the evanescent eternal.

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Little self-denials, little honesties, little passing words of sympathy, little nameless acts of kindness, little silent victories over favorite temptations — these are the little threads of gold, which, when woven together, gleam out so brightly in the pattern of life that God approves.

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Our life lies, not in retrospect of a vanished past ; not in hope of an ambitious future, our life is here,

now, to-day; in our prayers; in our beliefs; in our daily, hourly conduct.

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The life of the Christian is a life in Christ, a life in Christ is a life of peace, a life of order, a life of humility, a life of purity, a life of love.

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It is not the influence of external forces, but it is the germinal principle of *life* within which makes the good seed to grow.

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Nothing is more pitiful than a life spent in thinking of nothing but self, yes, even in thinking of nothing but one's own soul.

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Blessed and happy is he who shows in his own life that the repression of unlawful impulse is the well-spring of unwonted strength.

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He had learnt that Life is not only Worship, but also Service; that Charity is better than to speak with the tongue of angels: — that there is a nobleness even in wishing ourself accursed to save others: — that to each of us, and to all, God intrusts the love and care of each and all: — that love to Him our Father is best shown by love to Man our brother; that man has nobler things in life to work out, and to think of, than merely to save himself on some plank of prayer and self-denial out of the fiery surges of some devouring sea.

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We spend our lives as it were on the stage, and under the gaslight, when we might be walking in the sunlight under heaven !

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It is one of our great dangers that we live only half lives. We do not cultivate, as we should do, every part of our moral and physical constitution :

In this world who can do a thing will not,  
And he who would do, cannot, I perceive,  
And so we half-men struggle.

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For him who has sinned and suffered, repentance is the work of life.

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We must learn humility. It is a gloomy lesson, it is a monotonous lesson, it is a displeasing lesson, it is a lesson absolutely revolting to our intellectual and spiritual pride.

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“Is not this the carpenter?” Yes, the home of a Galilean peasant, mean and poor, containing probably but a single room, and no furniture except a mat, and some clay vessels, and a painted wooden chest : — Yes, the shop and the employ of a carpenter in the most despised village, of the despised province of a despised and conquered land, this was the trade, this the home, while He had a home, of our Lord and Master, the Son



of man, and for thirty long years of obscure toil it sufficed Him. What a lesson of divine humility!

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Though "enthusiast" be now a term of ridicule, though it has been well described as the tendency of the day "to tame goodness and greatness out of their splendid passion, and stamp virtue itself into a coinage of convenience," yet without enthusiasm the world would long ago have been that barren plain in which, if I may borrow the eloquent image of a modern statesman, "every mole-hill is a mountain, and every thistle a fruit-tree." No deed of permanent greatness, no deed of regenerating force, can be achieved without it. By it the great forerunner stood up undaunted before the murderous tyrant and the adulterous queen; by it Prophets and Apostles poured forth the messages which are still so pregnant with ethereal fire; by it martyrs and confessors made the emblem of a slave's death triumph over brutal armies and pagan emperors, and with "the irresistible might of weakness shook the world."

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What was it but enthusiasm which inspired Origen the Adamantine, when, at the age of fourteen, he stretched forth a hand that longed for the crown of martyrdom? or Athanasius, when, at the Council of Nice, he rose up in a flame of zeal to denounce the great heretic? or Luther, when going to face angry priests and threatening princes, he said that, if there were devils on every tile of the roofs of Worms, he would go there still? or Milton when in his great pure youth he looked at abuses, "with such an eye as struck

Gehazi with leprosy, and Simon Magus with a curse? or Whitfield when "amid the pelting scorn of half an age" he stood up at taverns and drunken fairs to preach the love of God to low women and degraded men? or Henry Martyn, when, with strange folly as men thought, he left the brilliant prospects of a Cambridge senior wranglership, to preach and fail among the heathen, and to die a few years afterwards in lonely anguish, vainly trying to cool his fevered head by thrusting it among the damp boxes of his luggage? Why, these are the men who in their eccentricity of goodness, their fanaticism of faith, tower above the dead and sluggish level of ordinary Christianity, as some volcano of the West — an Orizaba or a Chimborazo — which rears its majestic summit into the still depths of the aerial ocean, whose sides are clothed with every season and every clime, and whose burning crown shines forth like a beacon to the mariner over leagues of rolling and barren sea.

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When Christ sat on the green grass of the mountain-side, how did He soothe the troubles of that careworn multitude? was it not by pointing to the more than regal loveliness of the lilies of the field, and bidding them learn the tenderness of their heavenly Father by His care for the falling sparrow, and for the raven's callow brood? Blessed be the "enthusiasm" which teaches lessons such as these.

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A mere holiday opinion will never inspire the enthusiasms of conviction, but mankind will ever yield due

honour to a cause for which men are ready to suffer and die.

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I know, — for I find it alike in Scripture and experience, — that the love and study of the works of nature, the walking through the world with open and loving eyes, is one of the very best aids to faith, and one of the very simplest sources of happiness.

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Study and love the works of God : — they are better worth reading than the words of man, — they will give you simpler tastes and purer pleasures: . . . in happy moments they will make you happier; in friendless moments they will give you companionship; in troubled moments they will breathe you peace.

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Nature — wisest, gentlest, holiest of teachers.

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We who in these cities rarely see a sunrise, or notice a sunset — we who see so little of “the unfolding of the flower, or the falling of the dew, or the sleep of the green fields in the sunshine,” can hardly imagine what the glory of nature was to those poor hermits, as day by day the gorgeous pageant of the sunlight passed over their heads, and night after night “the stars leapt out, and hung like balls of white fire in that purple Southern sky.” The glories of nature gave to their purified spirits a high and constant communion with Nature’s God.

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A new voice, the great voice of the sea, broke with its grand but awful monotony upon his listening ear. As he gazed upon the waves, glowing and flashing with the golden net-work of autumnal sunbeams it seemed to dawn upon him like the discovery of a new sense.

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Vast, dense masses of white cloud gathered, resting here and there in the hollows of the mountains like gigantic walls and bastions, and leaning against the abrupter face of the precipice in one great unbroken barrier of opaque, immaculate pearl. As you looked upon it, the chief impression it gave you was one of immense thickness and crushing weight. It seemed so compressed and impermeable that one could not fancy how even a thunderbolt could shatter it, or the wildest blast of any hurricane dissipate its enormous depth. But as yet it had not enveloped the peaks themselves — on them the sun yet shone — they were still bathed in the keen yet blue and sunny air, islanded far up above the noiseless billows of surging cloud.

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It is a pretty, a delightful thing, in idle summer-time to lie at full length upon the beach on some ambrosial summer evening, when a glow floats over the water, whose calm surface is tenderly rippled with gold and blue. And while the children play beside you, dabbling and paddling in the wavelets, and digging up the ridges of yellow sand, which take the print of their pattering

footsteps, nothing is more pleasant than to let the transparent stream of the quiet tide splash musically with its light and motion to your very feet; nothing more pleasant than to listen to its silken murmurs, and to watch it flow upwards with its beneficent coolness, and take possession of the shore.

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It was one of the sunniest days of early spring; the air was pure and delicious, and the calm sea-breeze, just strong enough to make the sea flame and glisten in the warm sunlight, was as exhilarating as new wine. Underneath them the water was as transparent as crystal, and far below they could see the green and purple sea-weeds rising like a many-colored wood, through which occasionally they saw a fish, startled by their oars, dart like an arrow. The sky overhead was a cloudless blue, and as they kept not far from shore, the clearly cut outline of the coast, with its rocks and hills standing out in the vivid atmosphere, made a glowing picture, to which the golden green of the spring herbage, bathed in its morning sunlight, lent the magic of enchantment.

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Field after field, filled with yellowing harvests or grazing herds, stretched away to the horizon, and nothing on earth could be fairer than that soft sleep of the golden sunshine on the green and flowery meadowland; while overhead only a few silvery cloudlets variegated with their fleecy luster the expanse of blue, rippling down to the horizon like curves of white foam at the edges of a summer sea.

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The light of morning flowed in an ever-broadening river, and peak after peak flashed first into rose, then into crimson, and then into golden light, as the sun fell on their fields of snow; high overhead rose Alp after Alp of snow-white and luminous cloud, but the glowing curves of the hills themselves stood unveiled, with their crests cut clearly on the pale, divine, lustrous blue of heaven; . . . deep below, in the valley, "like handfuls of pearl in a goblet of emerald" the quaint châteaux clustered over their pastures of vivid grass, and gave that touch of human interest which alone was wanting to complete the loveliness of the scene.

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The sun had set behind the peaks of snow. . . . Ripples of luminous sunshine and banks of primrose colored clouds still lingered on the path which the sun had traversed, and, when even those began to fade, there stole along the hill crests above them a film of tender color, flinging a veil of the softest carnation over their cold gray rocks, and untrodden fields of perpetual snow.

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Reader, have you ever seen an Alpine pasture in warm July, at early morning? If not, you can hardly conceive the glorious carpet over which the feet of the wanderer in Switzerland press during summer tours. Around them soft mosses glow with gold and crimson, and the edges of the Lady's-mantle shimmer with such diamonds and pearls as never adorned a lady's mantle yet. Everywhere the grass is vivid with a many-

colored tissue of dew-dropped flowers: pale crocuses, and the bright crimson-lake carnation; and monk's-hood, and crow's-bill, and aster alpinas, and the lovely myosotis, and thousands of yellow and purple flowers, nameless or lovelier than their names, are the tapestry on which they tread; and it is interwoven through warp and woof with the blue gleam of a myriad blue-bells.

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Nature is but visible spirit that God *is*, and that He is a God of Love.

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He daily heard the voices of the mountain and the sea, and saw the mists shroud the mountain-tops, and through rents of their white veil caught glimpses of sunset and colorings of amazing loveliness.

He could see the flowers blow, and the dew fall, his soul undevastated by meaner cares could "climb by these sunbeams to the Father of Light."

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I have stood deep in an Alpine valley, and still wrapped in the cold and darkness far below, have seen the first sunbeam smite with its fierce splendor the highest mountain-top, and thought that it must be impossible by any toil to reach, from our dim low region, that encrimsoned height; and yet, as the sunrise leapt from peak to peak, and flowed and broadened in its golden streams down the mountain side, have climbed on and on with long toil, and under the full daylight have mounted to that topmost crest of eternal snow,

heaved high into the regions of blue air. So it is in the moral world. He who ever toils uphillward with his eye upon the summit

Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled,  
Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

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One of those golden summer evenings for whose peaceful loveliness, so sweet in its influence upon the anxious heart, we ought ever to thank God. The sun was setting, not in torrid and crimson splendor, but in a haze of soft light, which bathed the green fields in its quiet luster.

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What the eye sees and the ear hears depends in no small measure on the brain and the heart. The hieroglyphics of nature, like the inscriptions on the swords of Vathek, vary with every eye that glances on them; her voices like the voice of Helen to the ambushed Greeks, takes not one tone of their own, but the tone that each hearer loves best to hear.

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God has been very good to us: He has placed us in a fair world; He has given us the delight in knowledge; He has given us the charm of art; He has given us the glorious beauty of inanimate nature; He has written His love for us in large letters on the stars of heaven and in the flowers of the Spring.



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He who loves and admires creation, yet knows nothing of its plan, is like one who stands in a cavern of which the riches and beauty are but dimly seen ;— but to him who enters it with the torch of knowledge, its dim walls become illuminated with ten thousand glories.

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In the discourses of our Lord we find frequent allusions to the loveliness of the flowers, the joyous carelessness of birds, the shifting winds, the red glow of morning and evening clouds.

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How many of us notice, as loving and gifted observers might help us to notice, the multitudinous beauty and tenderness of the burst of Spring; the black ashbuds in March; the glistening chestnut-buds in April; the blaze of celandines; the golden dust in the catkins of the hazel; the rosy sheath of the larch-tree's fresh green leaves. A poet speaks of one to whom

A primrose by a river's brim,  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.

He means by these lines to express the difference between bare sight, and divine insight; between the cold unfurnished soul and the soul that sees the Unseen, sees God in all things, and sees all things in God.

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To his ears Nature brought infinite variations of melody; she whispered to him in the rustling of the

forest leaves ; she sung to him in the rising and falling of the wind ; she shouted aloud in the voices of the mountain and the sea.

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Sit out in the open air on a summer day, and how many of us have trained ourselves to notice the sweetness and the multiplicity of the influences which are combining for our delight—the song of birds ; the breeze beating balm upon the forehead, the genial warmth ; the delicate odor of ten thousand flowers ; the play of lovely colors ; “the soft eye-music of slow waving boughs ?” How many of us ever watch the pageant of the clouds, or take in the meaning of a stormy night, or so much as see the sunrise ?

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Surely in all nature, even if we look no farther, God has shown us that He desires our happiness. The God who flings the yellow rainbow across His storms, and bids the sunset rim His very thunderclouds with golden light, — that God who gives its splendor to the flower and its pearly lustre to the shell upon the shore — that God who makes the summer air sing with the hum of insects and the careless melody of happy birds — surely He did not wrap round this world with sweet air and bathe it in happy sunshine that we should regard gloom as the normal aspect of our lives !

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You may find God everywhere. The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. The great glorious world is His, the sky is His with its driving

clouds, with its sunset colorings, with its overarching canopy of stainless blue. The trees of the forest are His, with every moss and lichen that inlay their gnarled boughs with silver and emerald, and the flowers that nestle at their feet, and the birds that sing among their branches. The long summer, and the autumn with its raiment of gold and purple — and the sea is His, and He made it, and all that moveth therein.

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Than a careworn life nothing is more common. . . . The gay, epicurean, lyric poet of ancient Rome, sings even in his light strains, of “diseased care climbing the brazen trireme, and sitting triumphant behind the knight;” and modern myriads may tell you of cares haunting them in countless swarms from sunrise to sunset, nay, even “scaring the midnight pillow” and sitting heavy on the heart that has begun to heave already with the throes of death! cares for our livelihood, cares for our health, cares for our prosperity, cares for our incomes, cares more anxious than any others, about our children and our families, cares meanest of all others, as to what people will think of us or say of us, cares whether we shall succeed or no, cares out of a haunting past, cares, in a restless present, cares about an uncertain future, — oh it is a chaos, a weltering sea of cares for him who suffers himself to be choked therein. They fill healthy life with the unsubstantial phantoms of disease, they jangle its peaceful melodies into a tuneless discord, they plough with harrows of iron the brows which were once bright with baptismal dew. From how many have they torn the diadem to brand in its place

the festering stigma of the slave ; from how many have they taken " the freshness of the meadow, the coolness of the stream ;" in how many have they quenched, " bright thoughts, clear deeds, the constancy, the fidelity, the bounty, the generous honesty which are the germs of noble minds," . . . Yet we might shake them off for ever ; by sitting more loosely to the things of earth, by learning to despise the gilded dust which debases all who love it and set store by it, we might recover our manhood and be free. The pestilent malaria does not creep with more certainty out of the stagnant swamp over the doomed city than does that fatal blight which exhales over the soul from the undrained marshes of worldly care. O that we could all wring the black drop out of our souls. Then, if cares came, we could lay them all on Him who would bear for us their intolerable burden, and, after the very heaviest misfortune which could befall us, sorrowful it may be, but undebased,

We might take up our burden of life again,  
Not saying even " It might have been."

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Why should we be care-stricken ? What business have we to be sad in the sunshine ? we have nothing to do with the past, nothing to do with the future ; we have to do with the present only, and that, even in the hour of trial we are by God's grace strong enough to bear.

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Why do we who call ourselves Christians make our minds miserable by care and envy as we make our

bodies miserable by sin? God gives us bread and we turn it into a stone. We drive away from us our best friends and even our enemies with scorpions. And yet surely every one of us who has at all realized the central thoughts of Christianity, and the inner meaning of the Saviour's life, must feel that if not all forms of care, yet all those forms of earthly care which are most potent to make man wretched, ought to have been dispelled from the heart of him who has listened to the calm and loving invitation, "Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

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The kindly deeds of every life which has trodden in the warm footsteps of our Saviour through this world's dinted snow, have had their mainspring in that sympathy which was expressed by the sigh of Jesus.

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There is something inexpressibly beautiful and consoling in the thought that He, too — as for a High Priesthood which could be touched with a feeling of our infirmities — knew to the full the dignity, the happiness, the innocence, the holiness of family life. . . . It forms yet one more link of union between us and our Saviour.

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We must learn the lesson not of compassion only, but of *energy* therewith. Compassion which ends in compassion may be nothing more than the luxury of egotism, but the sigh of Jesus was but an instant's episode in a

life of toil. If His sigh binds us to pity all sin and all sorrow, it binds us no less to bend every effort of our lives toward the end that sin may cease and sorrow flee away.

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“He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows” longing only to heal, and save and bless. What a divine example, what a stimulus, what an encouragement, have we here! Our Lord saw all the sorrow; He did not ignore it; He sighed for it; He wept for it; He prayed for it — but not for one moment did He despair of it; — nay, He worked to lighten it, leaving us thereby, as in all things, an example that we should follow His steps.

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Christ raised an altar to Pity in every Christian heart.

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Sympathy is nothing else than a fellow-feeling with others. A sensible participation in their joy or woe.

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“Is not this the carpenter?” — We may indeed be thankful that the word remains, for it is full of meaning, and has exercised a very noble and blessed influence over the fortunes of mankind. It has tended to console and sanctify the estate of poverty: to ennoble the duty of labour; to elevate the entire conception of manhood, as of a condition which in itself above and apart from adventitious circumstances, has its own grandeur and dignity, in the sight of God.

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In all ages there has been an exaggerated desire for wealth ; an exaggerated admiration for those who possess it ; an exaggerated belief of its influence in producing or increasing the happiness of life ; and from those errors a flood of cares and jealousies and meanesses have devastated the life of man, and therefore Jesus chose voluntarily "the low estate of the poor, not indeed, an absorbing, degrading, grinding poverty, which is always rare, and almost always remediable, but that commonest lot of honest poverty, which, though it necessitates self-denial, can provide with care for all the necessities of a simple life.

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Believe me, we might make our poverty as happy as any wealth, if we would but have eyes to see the blessings it involves.

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Poverty, self-denial, the bearing of the yoke in youth, are the highest forms of discipline for a brave and godly manhood.

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Poverty and riches stand in God's estimation in reverse positions. Humble poverty is true wealth. Pampered wealth is real poverty. Let the poor brother glory in the beatitude of poverty : it is a gift of God.

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The inward joy of the Christian, if brightest in the sunshine, is unquenched even by the storm. The true

Christian, the perfect Christian, the Saint of God, can be glad even in adversity, and rich in poverty, and calm in the prospect of death. He stands high above the need of riches.

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In God's sight poverty, so far from being a disgrace is a beautiful and hallowed lot. You have but little of this world's goods, oh be faithful with that little and you will find it more than much. . . . There is such a thing as poverty which is rich in every element of a noble life. . . . Learn that a poverty which scorns luxury — which can dispense with superfluities — which can find life purest and strongest when it is disciplined under the beneficent laws of "high thinking and plain living," is wealthier in every element of happiness than,

Twenty seas, though all their shores are pearl,  
Their waters crystal, and their rocks pure gold.

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If we would rise to the full grandeur of our being, if we would live worthy of our immortality, let us bend our sternest efforts, let us strain our noblest faculties, let us absorb our entire beings in this one aim, to see God's face, to hear His voice, to do His will. . . . Let us try to-day to mark how He speaks to us in history, which is "the conscience of the human race," and which has never been more adequately described than as the "prophetical interpreter of that most sacred epic of which God is the poet, and humanity the theme.



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There is in history nothing unmeaning to one who regards it as the Voice of God speaking among the destinies of man.

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When we believe, as we *do* believe, that man is a member of Christ, a child of God, an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven; then indeed the history of man becomes a noble study; it becomes a chapter in that book of Revelation which enables us to recognize in the ways of God an order at once immutable and divine.

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A biographer may easily mistake the middle for the end, and fail to see that the apparent discord in the organ music is not, and cannot be, its close. We read the lives of the Saints of God, and we are perplexed at first and saddened to observe how one after another may seem to have perished broken-hearted and despised. . . . But let us not also fail to notice, that one and all, amid defeat and dishonour, and desertion, they never lose the beatific vision and the transcendent hope; one and all they stretch forth their hands in glorious anticipation of the farther shore. . . . True, that the *loftier* the ideal, the more complete may seem to be the failure; and the more unselfish the purpose, the more sad the life. In *seeming*, not in reality. Each high ideal is a prophesy which, later if not sooner, brings about its own fulfilment. No good deed dies; be it a rejoicing river, be it but a tiny rill of human nobleness, yet, so it be pure and clean, never has it been lost in the poisonous

marshes or choked in the muddy sands. It flows inevitably into that great river of the water of life which is not lost, save — if *that* be to be lost — in the infinite ocean of God's Eternal Love.

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Every great historian should be no dull registrar of events, but a prophet, standing, like him of old, amid the careless riot and luxurious banqueting of life, and teaching men to decipher that gleaming message of God, written, as with the fingers of a man's hand, on the parliament of nations and the palaces of kings, that what is morally just must be politically expedient, that "what is morally wrong cannot be politically right."

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"He, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant, will not fling us aside like broken implements, or mock us with delusive hopes. . . . If we fail at times to see this truth in the little facts of our own lives, let us look beyond them, and see it writ large upon the history of nations. What would a man know of the sea by standing but an hour or two beside its waters in some small bay? could he suppose that there was anything but idle chance in its little eddies or sweeping currents amid the windings of the shore, as it is fretted by chance puffs of wind, or sways over great beds of seaweed, or is torn by protruding rocks? But let him study the phenomena of the whole great deep, itself, and then he will learn with what magnificent and unerring regularity the moon sways the tidal march of those mighty waters which, as they roll onwards, majestic and irresistible whether in

ebb or flow, refresh and purify the world. Nor is it otherwise with history. A physical accident, a criminal ambition, a misinterpreted despatch, nay, even the changing of a wind, the stumbling of a horse, the depression of an omen, may seem to have influenced the fortune of nations; but these are, in reality, but eddies and bubbles on the surface of the advancing or receding tide; and, if not in our threescore years and ten, yet in the long millenniums of history, we see the great tidal waves of retribution overwhelming every nation which forgets the eternal distinctions of Right and Wrong,—we hear that voice of seven thunders which every true historian has always heard, proclaiming aloud that “for every false word and unrighteous deed, for insult and oppression, for lust and vanity, the price has to be paid at last. Truth and justice alone can endure and live. Falsehood and injustice may be long-lived, but doomsday comes to them in the end.

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Nothing can happen but what God intends.

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Each biography is but a fragment of history; each soul but an epitome of the world. Nations are but aggregates of such as you.

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The inventions of man differ wholly from the dealings of God. In His designs there is no haste, no rest, no heaviness, no discontinuity; all things are done by Him in the majesty of silence, and they are seen under a light

that shineth quietly in the darkness, "showing all things in the slow history of their ripening."

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Each of you once had or now has a birthright ; — the indwelling spirit of God, a divine voice within you restraining you from evil, encouraging you to good, — a childish heart full of holy obedience and sweetness, a memory unsullied as a crystal rivulet, an innocence as unstained as an angel robe, — a blush as pure as the auroral brightness, — a heart that had never known the agony of sin or shame, — this was a part of your birthright : Where is it now ?

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Keep an innocent heart and you need never fear trouble.

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The innocence of mere ignorance is a poor thing : it cannot under any circumstances be permanent, nor is it at all valuable as a foundation of character. The true preparation for life, the true basis of a manly character, is not to have been ignorant of evil, but to have known it, and avoided it, not to have been sheltered from temptation, but to have passed through it, and overcome it, by God's grace. The ruin of human souls can never be achieved by enemies from without, unless they be aided by traitors from within.

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Virtue is strong and beautiful, and vice is downcast in her awful presence. Lose your purity of heart, and

you have lost a jewel which the whole world if it were "one entire and perfect chrysolite" cannot replace.

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It may not be ours to be subtle and learned and logical, but it may be ours to be noble, and sweet, and pure.

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Being brave and innocent he feared nothing.

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Even the most advanced materialist admits that whether "approached exclusively from the side of natural history" or not, there is such a thing as Conscience and that its voice is heard in the soul of man.

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Why do we not all live to inherit this blessedness of which we are all the rightful heirs? Because, alas! we have not all, and not always, listened to that voice of conscience, and not to listen to it is misery; for when it ceases to warn, it begins to *accuse*. Conscience is her own avenger. To groan too late over a lost life, oh, what a misery is there!

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Separated from the thought of God, the conscience becomes an idle enigma. If it do not spring from Him, if it may not appeal to Him, if it cannot testify of Him, it has nothing to say and nothing to command. But herein lies its true supremacy, that it is the voice of that which even the heathen called "the God within us."



The first function of the conscience is to *warn*. And herein is much of its mystery, for it seems to be ourselves, yet not ourselves; inseparable from us, yet no part of us; speaking to us with gentle and divine approval, or with terrible and imperious authority, yet with no inherent power to determine our actions. Wholly beyond our mastery, it stands towards moral evil in the same relation that pain holds toward disease. When anything is wrong with our bodies, when any function is disturbed, when any mischief is latent, pain comes, whether we will or no, to warn us beneficently of our danger. Nor is it otherwise with the soul. All evil springs from evil thoughts, "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts," — evil thoughts — and then all the long black catalogue of sins you know. And since an evil thought is, to the soul, a disordered function, an undeveloped disease, a latent leprosy, — when it is lurking there — the pang of an alarmed conscience gives us timely warning. Vain is it to plead that this is but a thought; "Guard well" it says "thy thoughts; for thoughts are heard in heaven." It was a recognized principle of Roman law that *cogitationis pœnam nemo patitur*; but this is not the principle of that sole legislation which had an origin immediately divine. In every other code that the world has ever seen or known, you will find no prohibition of evil thoughts, but you *will* find that prohibition, alike in the first and in the last of those Ten Commandments which are the code of Him, who alone searcheth and knoweth the heart of man. Yea, in the code of Heaven, a bad thought

indulged is a bad deed committed. Oh, if we listen to this warning from the first, if we thus *obstamus principiis*, how strong, how noble, how impregnable to the assaults of evil may the soul become! For there are but two ways by which men grievously fall, the one is by some sudden access of temptation, the other by the subtle corrosion of some besetting sin. But into the latter, if we be true to that voice within us, we cannot fall, because innocence is nature's wisdom, and conscience faithfully cherished makes it more terrible, more difficult to yield than to resist: and if, on the other hand; evil, unable thus to surprise us by the noiseless and sinuous gliding of the serpent, bounds suddenly upon us with a wild beast's roar and leap, even then it will not master us, because then our habits and our impulses, being pure and true, shield themselves instantly under the strong breastplate of righteousness, and the reiterated choice of what was good has prepared the whole instinct of our nature, the whole bias of our character, for resistance to the sudden sin. Whatever be the shape that the vile allurement takes, the spirit within us thrills its glad response to the noble utterance of the stainless Hebrew boy, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" . . . This is the state at which we all should aim :

This is the happy warrior — this is he  
Whom every man at arms should wish to be.

For when we have attained this state, or are attaining to it, then we are happy. Then the eye being single, the whole body is full of light. We reverence our-

selves ; films fall away from our eyes ; we know that righteousness tendeth to life ; we cherish in our conscience the eternal protest against everything that can degrade and ruin us, the eternal witness that everything sweetest and noblest is within our reach.

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When conscience is our enemy there is no chance of a mind at ease.

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With a dead conscience a man himself may die, and perhaps often does die, his soul as stupefied as the senses of the traveller who lies down to sleep his last sleep on the fields of snow. But sometimes the task of the conscience is even not yet over. . . . Yes, sometimes for a man's punishment only, but sometimes also by God's infinite mercy, that a man may be saved by that fiery agony, the dead conscience leaps up into angry and terrible life once more, casts off the ceremonies which years of sin have bound around it, and starts, as the ghost of some murdered victim might start from the tomb, to upbraid its murderer. . . . Then though the Angel of Innocence have long vanished, the Angel of Repentance takes him gently by the hand. Gently it leads the broken-hearted penitent before the tribunal of his better self, and there his old sin, his old weakness, his old pride, his old will is doomed to that death of godly sorrow which even at the eleventh hour may issue in a new and nobler life, and may once more change conscience from a source of terror into a source of perfect and inalienable peace.



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The voice of your conscience is the voice of your God. Obey it, and you will find peace and holiness; disobey it, and you will lose the light of God's countenance, until you repent and learn to obey once more. But to repent heartily is to be forgiven wholly. . . . Christ, He alone can give peace to the accusing, to the gnawing, to the terrified; He alone can wake the sleeping conscience, and call it into life again when it is dead. "Neither is their salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

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Our church has judged that the mysteries of human iniquity are two awful, too wide-spread, too serious, to be ignored. Knowing that the day cometh when every heart shall lie bare before that Eye to whose gaze the very heavens are not clean, she has striven to purify the darkness by rending the films of self-deceit, and by making the soul start under the healing agony of shame. Looking around her on a world that lieth in wickedness, — conscious of the continuous tragedies which have been enacted on the narrow stage of sacred history, and of that history, in one sense no less sacred, which we all profane, — not ignorant of the deceitfulness which underlies the smooth conventionalities of nominally Christian lives, — she has bidden him who "thinketh he standeth, to take heed lest he fall;" and she has taught us to judge ourselves not by the superficial standards of ordinary society, but by the

the one weak link in a chain that otherwise may be strong and sound. That life, it has been said, must be reprobate indeed, in which sin is the narrative, and not the episode.

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It is the special and most perilous curse of sin that it obscures, or blots out altogether, or terribly distorts the vision of God in our hearts; it gradually reduces us to that most desolate of all conditions, "having no hope and without God in the world." It makes us in one form or another forget God.

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He loves you; He loathes your sins, but knowing that you are dust, he loves your souls. . . . Think of such love as this! a God, your God, the only God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, yearning, dying in love for such mean, such guilty, such wayward souls as ours; calling to us, while we refuse, stretching out His hands, while no man regardeth? O, think of it, especially when your heart is cowardly and bowed with sorrow and sin. Never despair; let the hope, nay the certainty of forgiveness bring back you, as it has brought back many a prodigal to his father's home. . . . Let not sin or Satan ever rob you of that Unchangeable Eternal Friend. Think of His great love, and do not grieve it; think of His cross of anguish, and crucify Him not afresh. . . . Under His pitying glance, the sin which was as crimson may become white as snow. . . . As yet, each new day is to you a new chance. The past lies behind you, it may be wasted and withered,

but like the Garden of Eden before you lie sleeping in the sunshine the golden fields of the present, the rich harvests of the future.

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Never can we be again as though we had not sinned at all. Let us recognize this stern truth : — The remission of sins, as you may read amid the shattered ruins of many a life, is not the remission of their consequences, nor are the perfect and unvexed fearlessness of the innocent attainable by the guilty even when they have been forgiven. In a day, in an hour, in a moment we may destroy a character which on earth can never be rebuilt. For how many a man has the sin of an instant proved the anguish of a life ! And even if by God's grace the deadliness of the wounds be healed, yet the unsightly scars must remain forever on our souls, and the malicious hands of merciless man will point to them. But, thanks be to God, God is more tender, more merciful, more long-suffering than miserable man.

. . . We cannot sink so low but that He will stoop to us out of His shining heavens, if we look to Him. . .

. . if we arise and go to Him, He will welcome us in His forgiving arms. . . . For this Christ died.

. . . One drop of Christ's most precious blood can cleanse us forever ; one whisper of His " Peace, be still " can silence the wrathful storms of an agitated conscience, and give us songs in the midnight of despair.

Anything which teaches us the infinite value of each human soul, anything which opens our eyes to the awfulness of these spiritual perils which assault and hurt

it, anything which brands upon our consciences the intense conviction that a *lax* view of sin is simply a *false* view of sin teaches us a lesson useful to all times, transcendently needful to our own.

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Every sin that we commit is a proof that we are not yet children of light, children of God, but that darkness still has power over us. For each such defection we must find forgiveness, and against each such defection we must strive more and more.

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There are two kinds of sin — wilful sin and willing sin. Wilful sin is that into which, because of the frailty of our nature, because of the strength of passion and temptation, — not loving, but loathing it — not seeking but resisting it, not acquiescing in, but fighting and struggling against it, — we all sometimes fall. This is the struggle in which God's spirit striveth with our spirit, and out of which we humbly believe and hope that God will at the end grant us victory and forgiveness. But there is another kind of sin, — far deadlier, far more heinous, far more incurable, — it is willing sin. It is when we are content with sin; when we have sold ourselves to sin; when we no longer fight against sin; when we mean to continue in sin. That is the darkest, lowest, deadliest, most irredeemable abyss of sin. . . . The path of *repentance* may never be closed to us . . . . but O how hard may that path of repentance be . . . . God is the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and of great

mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and yet by no means clearing the guilty. Why? Because He loves us not? Not so, for God's severity is all love: but because sin is the one deadly enemy which He must destroy in us, lest it destroy us, and we, with it, destroy ourselves; He must destroy it for our sakes, because,

The greatness of His mercy reacheth unto the heavens,  
And his Truth unto the clouds.

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How if some day in awful bitterness you have to number not your blessings, but your *sins*? How if like David you have to say, "My sins have taken such hold upon me that I am not able to look up" — ah, in that day the gentle Mene of warning will burst into the Mene of terror. For there is nothing more dreadful than a numbering of sins.

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It is written — "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God!" — when thou art doing thy duty, then, trust Him to the uttermost with a perfect confidence; but let no seductive whisper thrust thee into suicidal irreverence in thy demand for aid. Thus, to add the words omitted by the tempter, shalt thou be safe in all thy ways.

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Are we, never liable to tempt the Lord our God, as Israel tempted Him in the wilderness, as Christ refused to tempt Him on the Temple pinnacle? Yes, in many

ways. Christ would not cast Himself down, because He respected, as the laws of His Father, the laws of nature; and to cast Himself down would have been to brave and to violate them. Now we too, by our knowledge of those laws, by study of them, by obedience to them are placed as it were upon a pinnacle of the Temple, — on a pinnacle of that vast Cathedral of the Omnipotent, whose azure dome is the vault of heaven, and the stars its cresset lamps. Consider the supremacy of man in nature. For us are fire and hail, snow and vapor, wind and storm; for us are the glorious views of the mountain and the sea; for us the shell upon the sand has its rosy beauty, and the moon in heaven her silvery light. And look what man has done! How he has made the very elements minister to his happiness, and decrease his toil, — how he has — as it were, seized the very lightning by its wing of fire, and bidden it flash his messages through the heart of mighty mountains, and the bosom of raging seas. But how? *By exact obedience to the laws of Nature, never by insolent violation of them.* . . . Is there no moral lesson for us here? Aye, and a deep one; for the Book of Nature is also the Book of God, and the Voice of Nature, the Voice of God; and the history of man, and the life of man, would have been very different, if, instead of neglecting that Book, being deaf to that Voice, violating those Laws, and so flinging himself down from that Temple pinnacle, whereon his feet are set — he had in all respects and in all ages humbly and faithfully striven to understand and to obey. Half of the peace and prosperity of nations, half of the health and happiness of

man, half even of the serenity and security of moral life, depend on this. For pain, mutilation, disease, death, — these are the stern, instant, inexorable penalties affixed by nature to every violation of every law. . . . And, these laws have a direct bearing on the individual life of man. By obedience to their beneficent indication can we alone preserve a sound mind in a sound body. . . . Regard the laws of nature as a voice saying, "This, is the way, walk ye in it," and then, God's angels shall guard the man, in all his ways. The sudden terror, the pestilence of darkness, the arrow of noonday shall have no dread for him. Or if he suffer, he will calmly and cheerfully accept such suffering as a part of God's Providence for his mortal life, knowing that *any* suffering encountered for the sake of duty with unflinching courage, endured for the sake of duty with perfect trust, is only less noble than martyrdom itself.

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Again, *by our spiritual* and moral privileges, no less than by the laws of nature, we stand as it were upon the pinnacle of the Temple. Consider our lofty privileges. We are, every one of us, members of Christ, children of God, inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven. In infancy the Cross was signed upon our foreheads; in youth we were taught at Christ's school; in manhood the deepest and richest ordinances of a free and unpersecuted religion were placed wholly within our reach. How many by such privileges as these have been tempted to their own destruction! . . . How many in all ages have imagined that *they in particular* need not be guided by the strict letter of the moral law!

How is all such pride rebuked, how is the eternal majesty and grandeur of the moral law asserted, by Christ's calm answer "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

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*The devil tempts us* when he thrusts sin before us, but when we approach it of our own selves, it is then *we who tempt the devil.*

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He who dallies with temptation, he who tampers with evil, is *never* safe. People say that such and such a man had a sudden fall; but no fall is sudden. In every instance the crisis of the moment is decided only by the tenor of the life; nor, since this world began, has any man been dragged over into the domain of evil, who had not strayed carelessly, or gazed curiously, or lingered guiltily, beside its verge.

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Independently of God's inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, we are set as it were upon a pinnacle of the Temple, by the mere grandeur and loftiness of our being, by the freedom of our wills, by the immortality of our souls, by the glory and honour, a little lower than the angels, wherewith God has crowned our race. And how often, alas! and how fearfully, do men fling themselves down from this glory and grandeur, into the abyss!

For, indeed, by every sin, — above all by every *wilful*, by every *deliberate*, by every *habitual* sin, — we *do* fling ourselves from our high station down into shame and degradation, into guilt and fear, into fiery retribution,



and it may be, final loss. . . . So that *every* violation of God's law is to fling ourselves down from the Temple pinnacle into the foul and dark ravine.

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It has been often said that "hell is paved with good intentions;" it would be far more true to say that hell is paved with idle hopes. Century after century has the tempter been whispering to myriads and myriads of human souls, "Cast thyself boldly down. Yea, hath God said?—Fear not! Thou shalt not surely die. Thou shalt enjoy the sweetness of the sin, and shalt escape—for God is merciful—the bitterness of the punishment." And yes, my brethren, God *is* merciful; but shall we make His mercy an excuse for our wickedness, or pervert His love into an engine for our own destruction?

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That little matter. . . . the beginning of evil—it will be like the snow flake detached by the breath of air from the mountain-top, which as it rushes down, gains size, and strength, and impetus, till it has swollen to the mighty and irresistible avalanche that overwhelms garden, and field and village, in a chaos of indistinguishable death.

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If Satan tempt us to cast ourselves down from that high pinnacle, whereon we are now standing,—whether it be by neglecting the law of Nature, or by presuming on the law of Grace, or by defying the law of Retribution,—we shall, if we yield to that temptation, be yield-

ing to our own destruction. But to each of such temptations we have the true answer, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Trust Him, but tempt Him not. Trust Him, for thou art His child ; and if thou wilt love and fear Him, the very hairs of thy head are all numbered. In the accidents of life, in its dangers, in its difficulties, in its moral crises, yea, in the very valley of the shadow of death, trust Him, but in obedience, not in rebellion ; in faith, not in audacity ; in humble patience, not in insolent self-will. So, but so only, shall He give His angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

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This is St. Paul's comfort — not that our temptations are common to man, but that they are *human* ; that there is nothing strange, abnormal, insuperable about them ; that they are well within the scope of our power to struggle with.

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He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, tempers also the temptation to the weak soul. He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are but dust. Oh in that hero-multitude who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, think not that there are only the dauntless and the powerful, the great in heart and the strong in faith ; no, there are many of the weak and the timid, many of the obscure and the ignorant, many of the shrinking and the suffering there. We saw not, till they were unfolded for the flight of death, their angel wings.

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They who would pluck flowers from the very edge of the precipice must be prepared to fall. Those who long to sin God suffers to sin. The lingering thought passes into the vivid imagination, the vivid imagination into the burning wish, the burning wish into the half-formed purpose, the half-formed purpose into the hasty act.

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'Twas but a little drop of sin  
We saw this morning enter in,  
And lo! at eventide a world is drowned!

Is there nothing here for our instruction? Has there been nothing like this in your own past lives? Is not the same process repeated at each fresh development of the mystery of iniquity? Look back through the mists of memory, and remembering the sins of your past years, tell me if you might not have been forewarned then — if you may not be forewarned even now — by the method and progress of Eve's temptation? — You too have had your Eden of happy ignorance, and of an innocence yet unassailed, you too, in a sunlit childhood, have

— heard borne on the wind the articulate voice  
Of God, and angels to your sight appeared  
Crowning the glorious hills of Paradise:

but almost with the dawn of an intellectual life began the struggle of good with evil, and in that strife the innocence of childhood, which is as the dew of God, was brushed away from the soul, self-will sprung up. You found the physical nature strong, the moral weak. The voice of doubt whispered, "Yea, hath God said?" the

voice of impatient rebellion and conscious passion shouted, "Ye shall be as Gods." But so dear to God is the human soul, that it cannot at first go astray without a shudder and a pang. He has mercifully planted a thick hedge around our first transgressions, and relying it may be upon that, confident it may be in some instinctive sense of horror and of peril, in some frightened momentary cry for deliverance, in some remembered threatening of God's word, in some short and holy lesson learnt at a mother's knee, above all in some divine yearning intuition of a Saviour's love, you did not at once forsake the covenant of your God, but as though *thoughts* at least were harmless, you indulged your *thoughts* in a dangerous familiarity with wrong. But he whose thoughts are filled with earthly imaginations has no room left for thoughts of God. His fall is certain. Sin becomes to him more fair, more full of alluring sorcery. He who is not led as the Saviour was by the Spirit of God, but turned aside by the guilty glamour of a self-deceiving heart, leaves the ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace, to wander in the desert of spiritual danger, must be prepared in that desert to be with the wild beasts, to meet temptation at every turn, to be tortured more and more with a "burning Tantalian thirst," to be dazzled more and more to his own destruction by the delusive shine of the desert phantom, which, as it ever flies before him, will but vanish at last before his disenchanting eye amid the waste and glare of the scorching sands. Seldom in any case, and *never* save by the special grace of God, do guilty thoughts end in guilty thoughts.

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We fall, and we pity ourselves because we fall in a moment, but that fall is the fall, not of the moment, but of all the previous life ; it was but "the sign-manual of deed" which sooner or later the powers of evil demand from him who in heart has been long their own. And, when this sacrament of evil is over, then follows the common history. The sin which was at first cowardly, becomes next shameless, and lastly secure. Then "only this once" ends in "there is no harm in it." "*Abeunt studia in mores.*" The scarlet blossom ripens into the poisonous and ashy fruit.

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God is faithful ; and I believe He will lay no heavier burden on any one of us than we can carry well. Whether in the way of trial, or in the way of temptation, remember, my brethren, in the words of the poet,

'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,  
Another thing to fall.

We shall all be tempted, but the effects of the temptations depend upon ourselves.

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Because God loves us, because Christ died, because having risen again He shed forth the Spirit in our hearts, therefore under the fiercest assaults of Satan, the soul may always be safe.

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Every temptation, whether gradual or sudden, must be watched against ; every impediment, whether slight or serious, must be thrown aside. We are naturally proud, naturally discontented, naturally selfish ; that higher nature which makes men humble, sweet, self-sacrificing does not achieve the victory without a struggle.

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Here are three hints meant alike for the youngest and for the eldest — Resist *in the heart* ; resist *step by step* ; resist *insidious* attacks, no less than sudden attacks.

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Woe to the man, be he headstrong youth or would-be philosopher, be he an applauded genius or a successful man of the world — woe unto the man who dares to exalt his petty impotence against the divine majesty of the Moral Law. Be not deceived ; to violate it is a peril, to deny it is a blasphemy, which brings its own crushing Nemesis behind. The fires of Sinai still burn over the history of men and nations, and its dread thunders still roll across the centuries. “Opinions alter,” it has been said, “manners change, creeds rise and fall,” but the moral law is written upon the tablets of eternity. For every false word, or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust and vanity, the price has to be paid at last — Justice and Truth alone endure and live ; Injustice and Falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes to them in the end.

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Think not that throughout a godless life you can eat and drink and sin, and yet escape. If our first parents did not, neither will you. God has no favourites, He is no respecter of persons! . . . the most promising and the most popular, if he hath forgotten God, if he be giving himself up to the world, the flesh or the devil, will find no exemption from the inexorable consequence. Oh the quiver of God is full of arrows, sharp and manifold; and for you, if you be living in sin, no less certainly than if you saw it with your eyes, the arrow is drawn to the very head upon the bow of God,— nay, even now it may be singing through the parted air — whose wound shall eat into your soul like fire.

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The criminal may escape external consequences; he cannot escape natural results. You sin, and no miracle is wrought; the darkness is not peopled with avenging faces, nor do the walls around you begin to burn with messages of flame, yet then nevertheless, as an inevitable sequence, the law begins to work, and “God’s light shines on patiently and impartially, justifying or condemning simply by shewing all things in the slow history of their ripening.” “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Some of the ancients doubted, because the thunderbolts seemed to strike impartially the innocent and the guilty; but God does not avenge Himself by thunderbolts, He but leaves the sinner to the necessary outcome of his sin; aye, even the repentant sinner. For long after a man has done

with his sin, his sin has by no means done with him; his deeds live apart from him, and claim their fellowship with him long after he has grown ashamed of them; and he inherits them, for they are his. Look at the harvest rippling and bowing under the summer breeze with all its innumerable ears; innumerable as they seem, yet there is not one of them that did not spring from some seed which the sower sowed. Even so it is with the harvest of shame, of loneliness, of ruin, of agony which springs up in the lives of many men.

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They had doubted God's love, and now they dare not even gaze upon His face. His anger, as it always does, had "followed the method of their sins." It is ever thus that He "writes the cause of the judgment upon the forehead of the judgment itself" and makes the very sins which insult His majesty the instruments to avenge His will.

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The word of the Lord endureth forever; and therefore after death cometh the judgment. In one sense our judgment is always proceeding, always being recorded. At the foot of God's throne lies an open Book, wherein are written, in living characters for the day of witness, every secret and every open sin of our past lives; and each sinner ever bears about

A silent court of justice in himself,  
Himself the judge and jury, and himself  
The prisoner at the bar ever condemned;  
And that drags down his life.



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Whatever we may have thought or done in this world, however various and multiform our lives may have been, yet in the tablets of the angel-witnesses but one brief line of record will suffice to be transcribed upon our tombs, — “He did that which was good” — or “He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.”

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For all who have been sinners repentance is the work of life, a work to which all other work is insignificant indeed. But it is a work which never fails, and of which the end is eternal life.

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Whatever we once were, whatever we now are, we may still be accepted in the Beloved; we may seek even now in humble penitence the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness; we may arise and go unto our Father, against whom we have sinned so often and so grievously, in deep contrition, until to us, as to the happiest of His redeemed children, He hath granted the sweet assurance that we are washed, that we are sanctified, that we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

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Let us turn humbly and wisely; let us turn to the hopeful future from the helpless past. And as the traveller who has lost his way by night, and, startled suddenly to a sense of his danger by some lightning flash which reveals the rocks and chasms around him,

pauses terror-stricken to await the dawn; and, when the sun has dawned on his darkness, looking back to mark his error, shudders to see his own footsteps by the dizzy edge of the precipice and the tottering pine-branch by which he stumbled over the torrent, and then rises with a deep sigh, and thanks God, and girding his loins presses forward humbler and holier, sadder and wiser, on the road which shall lead him right, — so let us too, resolutely close our eyes to all the wasted years which may lie behind us, and praying God that the dayspring may arise in our hearts and lighten us into the path of repentance, press forward again with every surviving energy, towards the mark of the prize of our high calling.

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Souls there may be, which, even from the midst of abundant ease and surrounding splendor, are still able to wing heavenward their steady flight; — but to those who are wounded, — to those who have fallen, — to those who have sinned, — to those who have succumbed to the evil tyranny of habit, — to those, who blinded by the god of this world, have dethroned the supremacy of conscience, — to such the victory becomes only possible under some strenuous condition, and the fitting way for them is far rather the

Stone floor one may writhe on like a worm,  
than

The mossy pillow blue with violets.

Now — as in every age, and at all times we must *strive* to enter in at the strait gate.

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He who says I will struggle against sin hereafter, instead of saying I will struggle with it now, he who is content to fight with it in *fancy* "in the green avenues of the future" not in *fact* in the hot plains of to-day, will proceed to make excuses. . . . To put off repentance here is to court ruin, to postpone the season is to perpetuate the sin.

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Humble and sincere repentance forms the main distinction between man and man—and if happy is he who has kept innocency and done the thing that is right, happy also is he whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.

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Cultivate the whole of the nature which God has given you, and in doing so, remember that the mind is of more moment than the body, and the soul than both.

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In this age we require the knowledge of *things* and not of *words*; of the truths which great men tell us; and not of the tricks or individualities of their style; of that which shall add to the treasure of human knowledge, not of that which shall flatter its fastidiousness by frivolous attempts at reproducing its past elegancies of speech; of that which is best for human souls, and which shall make them greater, wiser, better; not of that which is idly supposed to make them more tasteful and refined.

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Those who decry classical education, do so from inexperience of its real character and value, and can hardly conceive the sense of strength and freedom which a young and ingenuous intellect acquires in all literature, and in all thought, by the laborious and successful endeavor to enter into that noble heritage which has been left us by the wisdom of by-gone generations.

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What is the use of education, if it be not to render it *impossible* for a man to know the meaning of *ennui*?

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At the universities more than anywhere, the aristocracy of intellect and character are almost solely recognized, and those patents of nobility honored which come direct from God.

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What is the use of education if it does not teach us to look on man as man, and judge by a nobler and more real standard than the superficial distinctions of society?

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A University, in its very conception, is a place for intellectual energy, directed to the glory of God, and the service of mankind; and if any man who neglects to train and cultivate his reason to the utmost is neglecting a simple and elementary duty which devolves on him in virtue of his mental and moral constitution, he is doubly guilty who neglects it *here*. Life is no

mere game, and there *are* such entities as the intellect and the soul. If any one be degrading a great University into a scene of amusement, and nothing more; if he be wholly and openly sacrificing its high aims to the poor ambitions of a bodily exercise, in which after all man can never attain the powers of some of his meanest congeners, he is living unworthily of himself, unworthily of the great society to which he belongs, unworthily of the high demands of the Christian calling. The days are long passed for gentlemanly ignorance; and he who has no ambition beyond the strenuous idleness of sport, is living for an excellence which is neither noble nor eternal, — for that which a few passing years shall unstring to feebleness, and a few years more dissolve to dust. Let him consider carefully whether he be following Christ's command, or whether to him belongs the solemn warning that "He who wandereth from the way of understanding, shall abide in the congregation of the dead."

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The object and purpose of a public school is to prepare the boy to become an intelligent and worthy man; to provide for the health and vigor of his body; to foster his opening intelligence and teach him the value of time, and save him from the disgrace and stagnation of idleness and ignorance; above all, to see that he grows pure, virtuous, manly, a gentleman and a Christian; in one word, its object is to train him that he may be "a profitable member of the Church and Commonwealth, and at last a partaker of the immortal glory of the resurrection."

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A great — and not the least useful — portion of university education consists in the intimate knowledge of character, and the many-sided sympathies which are thus insensibly acquired.

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As the waves pass but the river is perpetual, so the members of a great school are perpetually dissolving and being recomposed, but the school continues still. And it is mainly guided and moulded by a powerful tradition to the strength of which every single boy appreciably contributes.

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The philosopher who denies that Christianity has recognized the virtue of patriotism has not represented it aright, for Christianity is no dull system of formal ethics, but a living impulse, and one that speaks as loudly in patriotism as in all the other virtues which it has inspired.

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Christianity is no emasculated religion, no effeminate and silken system of bigots and of priests, nay, it is preëminently a strong and manly religion, and because manly, godlike. “Quit you like men;” virtue is manliness, and therefore valour, and chivalry, and enthusiasm, and gallantry, and strength of purpose, and a burning resentment against lies and cruelty and wrong are no mean parts, but rather essential elements of a lofty virtue. . . . No coward, no soft, pitiful creeping character could ever be truly Christian; for

Christianity exorcises that spirit of craven fear, and brands as contemptible the soul that wastes the glory of life with no higher object than eagerly to surround itself with comforts and greedily to heap up gain.

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Civilization is but a secular phrase for Christianity itself.

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Christianity is larger, wiser, purer, truer, deeper than the best words of its holiest interpreters.

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The lesson of the inherent sacredness of humanity was effectively taught by Christianity alone.

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Christianity is an historical religion, and our Christian faith is faith in God revealed in Christ.

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Christianity shall never die; it shall grow younger with years, it shall deepen in faith and wisdom, in dominion and power; in purity and peace; and all they who believe and live thereby shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.

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We do not concede that Christianity is uncongenial even as a moral system, and we beside maintain that no faith has ever been able like it to sway the affections and hearts of men.

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The ideal of the Christian family, an ideal lovelier and happier than any which the world has ever known, is the direct creation of Christianity.

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Christianity dawned as a new light in the darkness . . . . The morality and the philosophy of Paganism, as contrasted with the splendour of revealed truth and the holiness of Christian life, are but as moonlight is to sunlight. The Stoical philosophy may be compared to a torch which flings a faint gleam here and there in the dusky recesses of a mighty cavern. Christianity to the sun pouring into the inmost depths of the same cavern its seven-fold illumination. The torch had a value and brightness of its own, but compared with the dawning of that new glory it appears to be dim and ineffectual, even though its brightness was a real brightness, and had been drawn from the same ethereal source.

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True friendship is an attribute of virtue and righteousness, and can only be cemented between high and noble minds. Even the good man, who alone knows what a sacred thing true friendship is, may miss this blessing, and be forced to walk in utter loneliness through the dreary intercourse of daily life, scorning that hollow simulacrum with which conventionality desecrates the great name of friend; but if the good *may*, the bad man *must* miss it.



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Although a friend may remain faithful in misfortune, yet none but the very best and loftiest will remain faithful to us after our errors or our sins. For the same nobleness which creates the possibility of an unselfish friendship is of necessity shocked and alienated by meanness or wickedness in the friend it chose and loved. Such a man loved us because he thought our hearts as grand and noble as his own ; but when in this he finds himself deceived and disappointed,—when the ideal of his imagination lies shattered before him in the dust,—in spite of himself his love grows cold, and he turns aside with a shudder or a sigh. And thus it is that the very faults and infirmities and sins which drag us down from our fixed heights—the very errors which bring our calamities or our disquietude upon us,—the very conditions which make us most need a friend, are the very ones which alienate from us those friendships which are truest and best worth having, and leave our souls alone in their hour of sadness, “like a dismantled ship upon the troubled waters, or like a desolate wreck upon the naked shore.”

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All human friendship is of necessity a broken reed. .  
. . Is there none on whose arm we can lean, no bosom where we may rest our weary heads? Ay, my brethren, blessed be God indeed there is; there is an arm that will encircle us when all human help has failed; there is a Friend who will not be ashamed of us when all human love has perished, and all human countenance

has been withdrawn. . . . God the Holy, God the All-pure,—He loves us, He pities, He will never spurn us away; He is our one, our only, inalienable, unshaken Friend.

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There is a Friend always with you, who, even in your loneliest moments, leaves you not alone. He is a Friend loving and true, nor is He weak as we are — That Presence, that Love, that Friend, is God in Christ.

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I do earnestly desire that we should catch some lessons from the past; that while we thank God for what we believe to have been a closer insight into His will, and a truer ideal of His service than that of many of His saintly workers in the days of old, we may yet learn from them that deep, intense, self-sacrificing love for Him which ought not only to shelter them from crude and wholesale condemnation, but which ought to make them models to us of a more burning enthusiasm, of a more absolute devotion, of a more loving, a more holy, and a more spiritual life.

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Deeply, I fear, does this age need to take to heart the stern, inexorable necessity of self-conquest — Not in self-torture, but yet in earnest watchfulness; not in extreme fasting, but in habitual careful moderation; not in morbid self-introspection, but in thorough and vigorous occupation; not in enfeebling the body by maceration, but by filling its hours of work with strenuous and cheerful activity, and its hours of leisure with bright

thoughtfulness and many a silent prayer ;— by these blessed means we too, even in the midst of the world, may attain to the spirit which is dead to the world ; we may be keeping under our body and bringing it into subjection ; nay, in no mere formula, but in truthful figure be “ crucified with Christ.”

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Christ’s life of suffering and obedience is the *copy* over which we are to write, the track over which we are to walk, and so we are to be relieved from sin by the imitation of Christ.

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He that utterly despises the world shall rise above the world ; he that does not fear to be made a slur, can become more potent than a king ; if any man will be great among you, let him be your servant.

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God’s treasury, wherein we must cast our gifts, needs every mite as well as every talent we possess.

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Great principles find their proper issue in the faithful performances of little duties.

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God had created him worthy of being entrusted with a sacred cause, he had a work to do ; he had a Gospel to preach. If in obeying this call of God, he met with human sympathy and kindness well ; if not, it was no great matter. Life might be bitter, but life was short ;

and the light affliction which was but for a moment was nothing to the exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

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Sincerity and Charity are as the life-blood in the veins of the Church of which Christ is the Head and the Heart.

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Follow Christ, . . . In spirit, if not in letter, we must follow Him along the road He trod on earth, and that was a road of self-abnegation, of poverty, of homelessness, of the base man's hatred and the proud man's scorn. Let us not disguise it; it is no primrose path of dalliance, but a hard road, hard and yet happy, and all the highest and the noblest of earth have trodden it; all who have regarded the things eternal not as things future, but merely as the unseen realities about them now.

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We cannot serve God and mammon; if we follow Christ in anything but in name, we must sit loose to the world and the world's interests; we must be content, if need be, with the beatitudes of poverty and persecution.

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If we would follow Christ, we must shake off the baser objects of earthly desire as nothing better than the dust which gathers upon the cere-clothes of mortality. So Christ taught us and so He lived.

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You must follow Christ on the road of toil. Here too the manual labour and the mission labour of His own life are our example ; and were it possible to overlook its meaning, His own words would emphatically supply it. But it is not possible to misread lessons so clear and so heart-searching as those of the two sons and the labourers in the vineyard, and the unprofitable servant, and the stern apologue of the barren tree.

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He who would follow Christ must not only follow Him on the path of self-denial and of labour, but must follow Him also in the strength of *Enthusiasm*, must be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

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If you follow Christ, what shall be your reward ? and here let us not be mistaken ; Christianity is no far-sighted prudence, no vulgar aiming at a mere absence of disappointment and of pain ; if you serve with a selfish eye to the reward your service will not be accepted ; you must love the battle, not the victory ; the work, not the success ; you must be prepared to perish, the forlorn hope of humanity in the yet unconquered breach ; you must be prepared, again and again, “to give up your broken sword to Fate the conqueror with a humble and manly heart.” As the world goes your reward shall be nothing — not the palace or the equipage, nor the marble monument, or the wreath of fame ; — these may be won by “intense selfishness, intense worldliness, intense hardness of heart,” but *your* nobler reward

shall be the bleeding feet which yet are beautiful upon the mountains, and the aching brow which shall have an aureole for crown. — Successful? Nay, such a man may be miserable, — miserable as many a Prophet has been before him, amid the shout of the world's hatred and the sneers of its merciless contempt — and yet, "In the willing agony he plunges and is blest" — He will thank God daily, from his inmost heart, that he is thought worthy of that high suffering; nor would he change it for anything the world could give, or anything which it can take away. "*Felix est qui sic miser est*;" the breath of God shall be to him as "a moist whistling wind" amid the glare of the streaming flames, and in the world's burnt wilderness his food shall be manna from the Paradise of God.

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Let us strive to be of those, into whom the Spirit of God entering in all ages, has made them Sons of God and Prophets. These are the beacon-heights, which from generation to generation have caught and reflected back the risen light of the Sun of Righteousness; it is good to gaze upon their brightness; but it is better far to fix our eyes upon the source from which it sprang and, "with open face, reflecting as in a glass the glory of the Lord, to be changed into the same image from glory to glory." So may we all — with willing self-abandonment, with long toil, with burning zeal, — through praise or blame, through success or failure, in peace or in agony of heart — follow Christ now, that we may see His face hereafter, and, whithersoever He goeth, be not found absent from His side.

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The life of Christ unspeakably surpasses the fairest and sweetest lives of even His truest followers.

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In any family circle the gentle influence of one loving soul is sufficient to breathe around it an unspeakable calm; it has a soothing power like the shining of sunlight, or the voice of doves heard at evening.

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Whatever you do *yourself*, rests with *you*; but remember it is a ten-thousand-fold heavier and more accursed crime to set stumbling blocks in the way of others, to abuse your influence, to cause any of Christ's little ones to perish.

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As the life and death of each separate coral insect adds to the noiseless growth of the reef, which ultimately becomes an island or a continent, so does the life and death of each individual man add its permanent quota to those vast accumulations of experience and impulse which determine the conditions of humanity: He and his work may seem alike to perish; but just as no particle of matter can be destroyed, but only be caught up in the magic eddy of nature to be recombined in new forms with other elements;—and just as no force can be finally exhausted but remains impressed for ever on the material universe: so even the obscurest man who has ever lived has exercised a real influence, be it ever so infinitesimal, on the mighty whole of the

human race. Some men have directed the great movements which alter the relations of kingdoms; some men have materially modified the physical conditions of the globe; some men, by their inventions, have given new developments to the aims and labours of mankind, — have, by their works of art, haunted our imagination, or by their writings enriched our thoughts. But, among all these, none have a stronger claim to universal gratitude than those Saints of God who have kindled their names like beacon-lights upon the hills, to show to what lofty regions the foot of man can reach, what pure air the life of man can breathe. Others have improved the conditions of living; these have enhanced the blessedness of life itself. Others have brightened the gloom of things seen and temporal; these have fixed our hearts on things unseen and eternal.

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Do not fear that your influence will be small; no influence is small; but even if it were, the aggregate of small influences is far more irresistible than the most vigorous and heroic of isolated efforts.

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The record of the good men who have gone before us, is as a trumpet's blast to make us cry,

O that the forces indeed were arrayed! O joy of the onset!  
Sound, thou trumpet of God; come forth, great cause, to array us!

King and leader, appear; thy soldiers sorrowing call thee!

But He, the King and Leader, answers, "Walk in my steps, as those did. They tended my sheep; they fed



my lambs; they flung the offenders of my innocents with millstones round their necks into the sea; they crushed the viper-head of lies; they quenched the fire of intolerance; they dashed their hands in the lion-mouth of tyranny; they set at liberty the bruised victims of oppression. . . . They did all this: Can you do nothing? . . . Begin by thinking a little of others. Begin by sparing a little of your substance. Begin by giving cups of cold water in Christ's name to Christ's little ones. Begin by doing faithfully the small simple duty which lies nearest you. Begin by trying to feel so much of what Jesus felt when He sighed for a ruined world, as at least not daily to wring with sighs the heart of His ruined children, the heart of His faithful servants. So perchance may He at last send you also, even at the eleventh hour to work in His vineyard. So may He enable you to rise above yourselves and your own selfish interests, to feel what His sigh meant, and to labour in His sick and suffering world.

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You serve your country acceptably in the camp, and at the drill . . . and she thanks you, and her wives and her maidens honour and bless you! But, oh! you may serve her more, infinitely more, if you will serve her not only in public but alone, not only in your corps but in your lives: if you will devote, not some certain hours, but your very hearts to her service, whether it be in the senate or in the factory, whether it be in the artist's studio or the lawyer's chambers, or the workman's cottage, or the merchant's shop. There, and not here only, — there, in the secret hour of temp-

tation and the unseen crisis of strife — there, in your closet, with no eye upon your struggling soul save the unsleeping eye of God, — “quit you like men, be strong.”

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Ever and everywhere a mighty battle is raging around us, a battle in which we are all Volunteers, ay, and enrolled Soldiers on either side, — the great silent internal battle, of lust and purity, of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong. It needs no splendid occasion, no stately amphitheatre, no pomp and prodigality of outward circumstances : — for its seat is in the human heart. But its effects and issues are in the world.

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They who are resolutely in earnest to do good do not go about asking, “What good can I do?” they *do* it.

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If we desire to heal the deadly wounds of malice, we must look well to it that in our conversation be never heard the serpent’s hiss. We must speak no slander, no, nor listen to it. We must not help the half-brained dwarf society

To find low motives unto noble deeds,  
To fix all doubt upon the darker side,

but our speech must be with grace seasoned with salt. The reputation of our enemies must be as sacred from our gossip as those of our dearest relatives, and the absent must be as safe on our lips from secret malice as are the dead.

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“Here am I, send me!” And even while you pray thus, will you be willing to add with the deep submission of a good man in the last words which he wrote in his diary, “Let me labour to do God’s will, yet not anxious that it should be done by me rather than by others if God disapproves of my doing it?” Alas, my friends, how few of us are good enough — how few confident enough in ourselves — how many of us are too “false in virtue, and faintly dyed in integrity” to speak thus! — yet such men there have been.

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A Saint is one who makes his religion absolutely and inflexibly, and in a way little familiar to his generation, the rule of his whole life: and who, with a perfect absence of all self-consciousness, does this in such a manner as to seize the imagination and influence the character of his own, and of other generations.

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He had a deep and ready sympathy for the very least and poorest of the human race, because in the very lowest and poorest he saw those for whom Christ died.

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Our achievements lag perpetually far behind our ideal, and the hinder wheel can as little overtake the fore wheel of a chariot as our endeavors can overtake our sense of duty. But yet on the one hand the fact is clear, that the world is very sinful and very sorrowful; and the *duty* is clear — “Strive to make it better,” and

the *command* is clear — “Take thou thy individual share in the work of healing;” and the individual *promise* is clear, “Not a cup of cold water, given in Christ’s name to Christ’s little ones shall miss of its reward,” and the universal *fulfilment* of the promise is clear, that God has ever blessed with fruitfulness the honest labours of those who have laboured in His cause. And so in all hours of despondency, of means disproportionate, of opposition apparently overwhelming, the whisper comes to us: “Duties are thine,” “Results are Gods!” See only that thine intent be good and pure, and the worst thou mayest safely leave in the hands of God.

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Do not be troubled if, in spite of all that thou triest to do, the times are out of joint; and things go wrong, and thou seemest to do no good. God made the world, not thou. He has patience, shouldest not thou have patience? — Even thy poor good deeds cannot die. If they seem at first to yield no fruit, they shall still be as seeds shut up in the darkness of a sepulchre, and when they are taken from the hands of time, years afterwards, it may be, they shall rise in golden grain. Be it little, be it much, God will accept thy honest offering.

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Results the most vast are brought about by the aggregate of small separate exertions. The coral insect is a small and ephemeral creature with soft and feeble body, yet the results of its insignificant existence, the contributions of its tiny grain, rears the league-long reef which

forms a barrier in the ocean, or builds the bases of continents which form for untold ages the home of man. Let none of us try to prove that we have but little responsibility: "We never die; we are the waves of the ocean of life, communicating motion to the expanse before us, and leaving the history we have made on the shore behind."

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We suffer even in our spiritual life when we confine our thoughts to the narrow horizon of our individual welfare. If the great remedy for unselfishness be the example of Christ, if the great work of Christ was to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the whole world, then surely he must be the best and truest man whose hopes and fears are not wholly absorbed with the silence and seclusion of his interior life, but who yearns for the religion of active service, who desires to follow in the Divine footsteps of Him who "went about doing good."

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Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people. If we never go to war save when justice and righteousness require that we should do so, — if our dealings with any other nation, whether weak or strong, whether civilized or savage, be rigidly and chivalrously upright; — if our commerce be not corrupted at the fount by that horrible selfishness which sacrifices nations to its insatiate greed of gain; — then we may expect, and we shall receive a blessing from the God of all nations, for then the one principle of all our foreign policy will be this — to aim at ever finding our own highest good in the highest good of all mankind.

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If we would find the one true ideal, if we would seek the sole Divine example, we must look to Christ and Christ alone. The brightest luster of His brightest followers is but, at the best, like that dim earth-shine reflected from our planet upon the unilluminated orb of its satellite, the most eloquent of His servants does but interpret Him with imperfect utterance and a stammering tongue.

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How wide, how noble is the sphere of enlightened Christian politics! What ample scope is there still for men to win a civic wreath as green as that of Chatham or Wilberforce! To see that the very weakest and humblest be safe under the inviolable protection of equal laws; to see that by the universal extension of sound learning and religious education a limit be put to brutality and sin; — to see that there be a national acknowledgment of our allegiance to Him before whom all nations are but as dust in the balance — does this open no sphere of action wide enough for the most soaring ambition?

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In all ages, and in all countries they who have sought for God have found Him, they have attained to high principles of thought, and to high standards of action — they have been enabled, even in the thick darkness, resolutely to place their feet at least on the lowest rounds of that ladder of sunbeams which winds up through the darkness to the great Father of Lights.

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In Seneca's life, we see as clearly as in those of many professing Christians that it is impossible to be at once worldly and righteous. Seneca's utter failure was due to the vain attempt to combine in his own person two opposite characters — that of a stoic, and that of a courtier.

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We live, in a world, in a universe of death, . . . .  
“The soil we tread on,” it has been said, “is a great city of the dead, with ever-extending pavements of gravestones, and ever-lengthening streets of tombs and sepulchers, the burial-place of all that ever lived in the past, dead individuals, dead species, dead genera, dead creations, a universe of death.” And we no less than they, are but grass for the mower's scythe. We too have advanced far on our way towards that great silence into which we have seen so many pass. The phenomenon is common to us, but no familiarity can rob it of its dreadfulness; for the dead who are the more in number have kept their awful secret unrevealed; and the child who died yesterday knows more than can be guessed at by the one thousand millions of living men. Yet this death is but the least, and the least dreaded part of that other, that second, that spiritual death which God meant in that earliest warning, “In the day that thou eatest thereof,” dying thou shalt die.

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When the glory of an unsullied heart is gone, — when in lieu of it has come that sense of self-disgust which is

the bitterest of woes,— when the fiery barrier of a corrupted will waves between us and the heaven of our lost innocence,— when like some “desolate wreck upon the lonely shore” we lie at the mercy of every storm of misfortune, and every surge of sin,— when to us, in our guilty fear, the heavens seem to be full of anger, and “earth to be made of glass,”— when that which we do we loath, and of all that we feel to be sweetest and noblest our souls despair,— when we are suffering in every region of our being the ignoble martyrdom of sin, “the scathing of the flame without its purification,” and the burden of the cross without its peace,— above all— when conscious of our vileness we hear as it were the sound of God’s awful footsteps walking among the garden trees, and He, who is our Friend, our Father, the Author of our life, the Redeemer of our souls, has turned away His face from us, and has become to us a thick darkness or a consuming fire,— then we may call it a death-in-life or a life-in-death, but the stern plain Scripture calls it death. For when goodness is dead and hope is dead, and the fire of God’s love is dead on the altar of his heart, a man may have a *name* to live, but he is dead. To be carnally minded is death; to have lost sight of God in the world’s wilderness is death.

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“I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; He is risen, as He said.” So spake the sweet angel voices to those devoted women whose love made them the last beside the cross of Jesus, and the earliest at His tomb. So spake the sweet angel voices,



and their words roll on to us with the divine echoes of joy and hope over the long interspace of eighteen hundred years. Hardly less sweet are these memories of Christ's Resurrection to us who have reached the age of manhood or declining years, than are the merry bells and blithe carols that tell of the Nativity to the mirthful and the young. To them in the bright morning of life belong especially the rejoicings which fitly commemorate that holy infancy of Jesus, so full of favour with God and man; to us, who have all drunk some drops of His bitter cup, and felt some sparks of His fiery baptism, belong rather the triumphs and the hopes which, as our years draw onward and pass into the ever-deepening shade, remind us, with stronger significance that our Lord and Master died as we must soon die, and that He put His foot upon the skull of death, that He might still the groan of a travailing creation, and take from us all dread of the conquered foe.

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We are told that most savage nations live in a constant horror of death; their life is one long flight from it; it poisons their happiness; it bursts like a ghastly phantom upon their moments of peace. It is not death the agony that they shudder at, though there may be something terrible in that, but death the mystery, and "next to God the most infinite of mysteries;" death that slips the last cable of the soul, and sets it afloat on the shoreless sea of an eternal world; there it is that lies for them "the mute ineffable, voiceless horror before which all human courage is abashed." Can you wonder at this continuous dread? They know of no world be-

yond the grave, and what would life be without the trust in that? How purposeless and mean, how weary and hopeless; a journey leading nowhither; a gate opening upon nothing; a ship sent forth only that she may founder in the bare unknown deeps.

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If there be no resurrection of the dead how infinitely pathetic, how quite unspeakably heart-rending, would be the phenomena of death itself. . . Oh, if there were no resurrection, how could we bear it? would not the thought crush us down for very grief into the open grave? . . . But for the body there is a resurrection, for the soul an immortality; death and the worm are not the universal conquerors; — death and sin are not the powers or the realities of the universe, but lying rebels which for our sakes God hath vanquished and trampled under foot; that with a body the same though glorified, with a soul the same though infinitely enlarged, we shall live when time itself shall be no more; the same, — but baptized, we trust, in the river of the water of life, and with all its many, many blots and stains washed white in the precious blood of Christ the Lamb.

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Christ is risen. O how do those words change the whole aspect of human life! The sunlight that gleams forth after the world has been drenched, and dashed, and terrified with the black thunder-drops, re-awakening the song of birds and re-illuminating the bloom of the folded flowers, does not more gloriously transfigure the landscape than those words transfigure the life

of man. Nothing short of this could be our pledge and proof that we also shall arise. We are not left to dim intimations of it from the reminiscences of childhood ; vague hopes of it in exalted moments ; splendid guesses of it in ancient pages ; faint analogies of it from the dawn of day, and the renovation of spring, and the quickened grain, and the butterfly shaking itself free of the enclosing chrysalis to wave its wings in the glories of summer light ; all this might create a longing, the sense of some far-off possibility in a few chosen souls, but not for all the weary and suffering sons of humanity a permanent and ennobling conviction, a sure and certain hope. But Christ is risen, and we have it now ; a thought to comfort in the gloom of adversity, a belief to raise us into the high privilege of sons of God.

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They that are fallen asleep in Christ are not perished. Look into the Saviour's empty and angel-haunted tomb ; He hath burst for us the bonds of the prison-house ; He hath shattered at a touch the iron bars and brazen gates ; He hath rifled the house of the spoiler, and torn away the serpent's sting ! He is not here ; for He is risen, as He said. They that sleep in all those narrow graves shall wake again, shall rise again. Weep not, oh widowed wife, for him whose image was in thy heart ; for thou shalt see him again. Weep not, oh father, for that gallant son, whose life-blood welled out as he lay face upward on the field of death. Weep not, oh orphan boy, for the sainted mother, whose kiss shall never again be warm upon thy brow. Thy dead men shall live ; they that

sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise; out of the dust of the earth shall they unfold the wings wrapped within them, and rise redeemed from earth, and fly under the sunlight, and shake from their stained garments the ashes of mortality and death. In innumerable myriads from the earth, and from the river, and from the rolling waves of the mighty sea, shall they start up at the sounding of that angel trumpet: from peaceful churchyards, from bloody battle-fields, from the catacomb and from the pyramid, from the marble monument and the mountain-cave, great and small, saint and prophet and apostle, and thronging multitudes of unknown martyrs and unrecorded heroes, in every age and every climate, on whose forehead was the Lamb's seal — they shall come forth from the power of Death and Hell. What a mighty victory! what a giant spoiling! what a trampling of the last enemy beneath the feet! Aye, Death, smote for ages God's fair creation, he lifted up his hand against the Lord's anointed, he seemed as irresistible as terrible; and yet not kings only and mighty men, but the soul of the meanest beggar that ever died of want in the crowded city street, and the soul of the tenderest new-born infant that passed away like a thin breath of air a thousand years ago, shall be delivered safe and uninjured, yea, glorified and immortal, out of his armed and icy hand! What a hope I say again, what a change in the thought of life!

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Bravely and happily let us walk through this Dark Valley; for though the rocks overshadow, and the

Phantom haunts it, at the end of it is a door of hope — a door of Immortality that opens on the gardens of heaven, and the trees and streams of life. A dim, weary, troubled life here perhaps, if God sees fit, ended by a spasm, a struggle, an agony — and then to have the whole soul flooded by the sense of a newer and grander being, and our tears wiped away by God's own hand. This is the Christian's hope, and truly herein Christ maketh us more than conquerors; more than conquerors, for we not only triumph over the enemy but profit by him, wringing out of his curse a blessing; out of his prison a coronation and a home. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

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"Lift up your heads, oh ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in;" yes, but not He alone. When the triumphs of the chariots of God, even thousands of angels, swept behind Him in their unseen procession, the everlasting portals closed not after them; they are open still, open to us, and to our race, and through them pass, and shall pass till the end of time, the thronging souls of the redeemed. He went to prepare a place for those He loved; He went up on high, He led captivity captive, to receive gifts for men, "yea even for His enemies that the Lord might dwell among them." He went out as the great forerunner of His people, and we must follow in His course; where the Head is there should the members be; and

our treasure, our life, our affection are meant to be with Him at the right hand of God. O how long then shall our hearts be grovelling in the world; how long shall they be tossed like bubbles on the waves of its unrest; how long shall they be covered with the dust of its meanness and the stain of its sins; shall they never unfold the wings wrapped within them, and thither ascend, and shake the mire of earthliness from the white robes of spiritual resurrection? Shall they thus stoop and pine, and waste away for ever? O rather let us hear the cries that come to us from heaven above, and from the earth beneath, from the works of nature, and the voices of conscience, and from the wail of the weary, and from all the graves of man, the cry of *Sursum corda* — “Lift up your hearts;” and from every one of us let the answer be, “We lift them up unto the Lord.”

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There is perhaps no book from which we may learn so much about the condition of the dead as from the Book of Revelation. But after all it is but one little corner of the curtain that is lifted; let those who will lift it more if they can, and strive to peer behind it. For us let it be enough that the dead as well as the living, are in God's hand. I ask no more, I know no more. I pretend to know no more. For us too the veil shall one day be drawn, and we too shall know. Till then, as one who from the shore watches a friend sail away towards the sunset, and the vessel sinks behind a round of lighted sea, and the sacred darkness follows, even so we look after the dead, and know little or nothing of

the new strange regions which they have sought. Here we cannot know; but, as I said before, one day we too shall know; and meanwhile, "in the sure and certain hope of resurrection," with these words we commend their mortal bodies to the dust.

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And their works do follow them.

This verse calls us to consider the dead. Not in their new condition, but in their immortal memory; not as what they are in death, but as what they were in life; and not the dead generally, but the dead who die in the Lord, that is the noble dead. I say the noble dead, not the useless and the worthless dead, — for the hope of the ungodly is like the dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is disturbed here and there with the tempest; "but the righteous live for evermore, their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them with the Most High."

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God before whom we stand is not only our Judge and our Creator, but also our Father and our Friend. Behold Him revealed to us in Christ! . . . In the valley of the shadow of death His brightness illumines every step. . . Only believe in Him and He will lead you — He will in the hour of death fling open the gates of Everlasting Life, and pronounce those blessed words — "Servant of God, well done."

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In other stars, amid His countless worlds, for all we know God may have work for us to do: who knows what radiant ministrations; what infinite activities; what never ending progress; what immeasurable happiness, what living ecstasies of unimaginable rapture, where all things are lovely, honourable, pure. . . . This, this is Heaven! And why should we not believe that the God who is so good to us hath such good things in store for all who love Him? All the good and true, all the pure and noble, shall be there: and all on earth who have ever been high and sweet and worthy, out of every tribe, and kindred, and nation, and language,—ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands! oh, if this be a dull, gross, selfish, sensual conception, give us a greater and a better that we may live on it! for we can conceive none lovelier than this, and to us *this* is Heaven.

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All Christians have dwelt with rapture on the glowing symbols of the poet of the Apocalypse—the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious, even unto a jasper stone; and the gates of pearl, and the foundations of precious stones, and the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, and the Tree of Life with its leaves for the healing of the nations. Symbols only, — yet exquisite symbols — of the poet's vision which dull philosophies may scorn, but in which a Dante and a Milton delighted; symbols which



come back to us with the freshness and sweetness of childhood, as we sing the hymns, so dear to Christian worship, of "Jerusalem the golden," or, "There is a land of pure delight." Yet even these symbolic passages do not thrill the heart so keenly as others, which speak with scarce a symbol, and simply tell of a life without life's agonies, and the vision of God undarkened by mists of sin.

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If we need *any* symbols to help us, there are symbols of transparent meaning; green meadows, where men may breathe God's fresh air, and see His golden light; glorified cities . . . white robes, pure emblems of stainless innocence the crown and the palm-branch, and the throne of serene self-mastery over our spiritual enemies; and the golden harp, and the endless song, — which do but speak of abounding happiness, in that form of it which is, of all others, the most innocent, the most thrilling, the most intense.

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The kingdom of heaven is eternal, is infinite; it has many mansions; but the gate is single, the path narrow, the roof low. He who would enter must cut a line between his present and his past. In one word he must be converted; — he must be born again.

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The thoughts of God are higher than men, and the ways of God are juster. For the saints who hate each other, who persecute each other, who denounce each

other as heretics, who attribute to each other the worst motives, who call down on each other the indignation of God and man, Heaven opens its pitying harmonious doors; and these holders of mutually destructive opinions shall, with a smile at the old leaven of their anathematizing ignorance, and a sigh, if there be sighs in Heaven, for the aching hearts they caused each other on earth — shall in the light of their Father's countenance "clasp inseparable hands in joy and bliss in one measure, for ever." Yes, Heaven, we hope, will have its healing power for the bitter dissensions even of earth's saints.

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The form, the fashion, the duration, of that which may be hereafter I know not: but this I do know, that Heaven and Hell are not distant localities, not golden cities in the far-off blue, or lakes of brimstone in the central fire, but that they are now, and that they are here. The pure, the peaceful, the loving, the earnest heart, that is heaven now; the guilty, the coward, the useless, the corrupted, the envious, the discontented heart, that is hell now, and, till purged and cleansed, can never be anything but a hell, which the worm and the fire can make no worse. Yes, the Eternal is not opposite to the Temporal, but to the Visible; it is not a period, but a condition; not a locality, but a state; not a thing of the future, but of the for ever. Let us live with the sense of it about us now, and then we cannot live those utterly dreary, empty, idle, unprofitable, vicious lives which we sometimes see. The eternal things are all around us.

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We feel sure He did not mean us merely "to be born weeping, to live complaining, and to die disappointed," and to cease to be, but that He has a new home for us in other worlds. It is the *fact* which we believe, the details are not revealed to us.

Oh, to *be*, what here we have only seemed to be, or wished to be! oh, to be honest, true, noble, sincere, genuine, pure, holy to the heart's inmost core! Is not that Heaven?

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So far as Heaven is a place at all, its fundamental conception is that it is a place where sin is not. . . . No guilty step may pass the gates of pearl — no polluting presence fling shadows on the golden streets. They who live there are the angels, and just men made perfect, and the spirits of the saints in light, and if ever we get there, we shall be as they, for to be there is to see the face of God, and to see the face of God is to be changed into the same image from glory to glory.

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It is one of the very finest and deepest sayings of the great sage of China that "Heaven means principle." With him, with all good men who have ever lived, this was the solid result and outcome of experience. Other sources of happiness are but as transient gleams of sunlight, but this is life eternal; other blessings fade as the flowers fade, but this is an everlasting foundation. How full is all Scripture of this one lesson! With what a glow of belief, with what a force of conviction, do these

divine utterances crowd upon us, "Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; oh well is he, and happy shall he be!" "The Lord ordereth a good man's going, and maketh his way acceptable to himself." "Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is the fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

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Death is always uncertain. Who knows but even now the fatal arrow may have leapt from the string! Yet, we still have time to repent and to turn to God. And if the arrow smite us, it shall have no sting, no victory then. It shall but glance down from Heaven the welcome, the blessed signal, that pure, happy, redeemed, forgiven we may pass into the Presence of our God — not far from the kingdom of Heaven now — we shall be in it, for ever — then.

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Fight against greed, fight against falsity, fight against faithlessness, and so shall you be ready for all God's work both now and any time hereafter, until your Master gives you the signal that you may fall out of the ranks, or it is time for you, not as men might say in their despair, to give up their broken swords to Fate the Conqueror, but to yield your pure souls to your Captain Christ. Then, whatever happens, your life will not have been in vain; then having heard His voice here you shall be with Him hereafter and you shall say, as you stand, with bowed head indeed and awful reverence, but yet a forgiven and an acceptable child before

that unutterable glory,—you shall say, with such joy as here the heart of man cannot conceive, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee.”

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“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” . . . Blessed words!—They are words of mercy, of strength, of confidence, of comfort. . . . Very earnestly would I pray to Almighty God, that, as a savor of life unto life, their meaning may linger in our souls; and that thereby we may be helped forward by God’s grace on the path of a Christian life, feeling more peace amidst its troubles, more courage under its difficulties, more hope amid its failures, more joy as the quiet scenes of its many blessings gleam forth under the sunlight of God’s approving smile.

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In a world of sin and sorrow, in a moral world which has its own disgraces and defeats, St. Paul would point us not to those sad pale multitudes of wasted and ruined lives,—not to the retributive diseases of desecrated bodies, or the gnawing Nemesis of guilty souls,—not to the chain of the felon, or the cell of the lunatic, or the grave of the suicide,—ah no! these with an infinite pity, these with a faith that transcends and tramples on the petty Pharisaisms of dogma, these, sorrowing but not scorning, compassionating but not con-

demning, we leave with infinite tenderness in the tender hands of God, — but no! *He* points us, and we point you now, to the glorious company of the high and noble, of the pure and holy, to the white-robed, palm-bearing procession of happy human souls; to those who have fought and conquered, to those who have wrestled and overcome.

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Ascension Day is a day of triumph, of glorious triumph, for which the mightiest clang of the whole world's minstrelsy and music were not too loud. For what have we to fear any longer? the only enemies we had ever need to fear were Sin, and Death, and Hell; and look how high the heaven is from the earth, so far hath God removed our *sins* from us; and *hell* we are told shall deliver up her dead, and be flung into a lake of fire; and, putting all enemies beneath His feet, Christ shall crush last the skull of Death. It is our pledge of victory in the Armageddon of the world; the victory of truth over lies, of God's love over the devil's hate, of the slave over his oppressor, of divine glory over human degradation, of the spirit over the flesh, of God's transcendent power and mercy over man's corrupt and fallen will.

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Is it only the peaceful, the happy, the victorious dead, whose work is over while we toil on; — who have gained the shore while we are heaved up and down upon the labouring sea; — is it they alone who see God's face? is it not suffered us to see it even through the vapours of mortal life? Not fully, my brethren;

only in part, only as through the dim reflection of a silver mirror — only as shows ever some gleaming of His robe, hid under the hollow of His hand in a cleft of the burning hill. And yet, even thus to see God is our only chance, our only hope of happiness here.

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Christ was victorious, through that self-renunciation through which alone victory can be won. And the moments of such honest struggle crowned with victory are the very sweetest and happiest that the life of man can give.

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Walk very humbly with your God. Struggle on, if it be only inch by inch, till the rout is resistance and the resistance Victory. I would not tell you do this, if you had to struggle unaided — but it is not so — God is with you. For you Christ died.

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All good angels lean over you with their glittering faces; the silent company of the immortal dead, the household and city of God above, are with you.

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Though no vision is vouchsafed to our mortal eyes, — although the darkness does not move and flash around us with bright faces and glorious plumes, — yet angels of God are with us oftener than we know, and to the pure heart every home is a Bethel, and every path of life a Penuel and a Mahanaim. In the outer world, and the inner world do we see and meet contin-

ually these messengers of God. In the outer world God maketh the winds His angels, and the flames of fire His messengers; the sun and the moon utter His knowledge, and the morning stars shout His praise. And in the inner world there are angels too, — the angels of youth, and of innocence, and of opportunity; the angels of prayer, and of time, and of death:

*Our acts our angels are — or good or ill,  
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.*

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Listen, while I speak of some of those angels who meet us in the path of life; and earnestly would I exhort you to wrestle with them and prevail, as Jacob did — to wring from them the blessings they can give, crying to each one of them, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." First is the earliest angel, the angel of Youth, — very rapidly will he pass by, and when once gone, he is gone forever. Every year that you neglect him will fewer blessings be possible to obtain from him; . . . Oh! use as wise stewards, this blessed portion of your lives, . . . Remember that as your faces are setting into the look which they shall wear in later years, so it is with your lives. Remember that "every act of yours is a seed, planted either in heaven, or in hell, and producing for you there this very hour, the sweetest or the deadliest fruits." — This angel of Youth can take you by the hand and lead you to the threshold of noble manhood, strong, and patient, great in good works, irresistible in innocence, glowing with zeal, armed with the helmet of holiness and the



shield of truth. Next is the angel of Innocent Pleasure, — “Innocent Happiness,” oh what a world of meaning lies in these two words, and what a heaven on earth they signify! . . . .

And then there are the angels of Time, and Opportunity. They are with us now, and even now we may unclench from their conquered hands garlands of immortal flowers:—yet with beating wing and soundless footfall they are ever bearing us onward, — bearing us through a dark river and to an unknown land . . . . We stand with our feet in the wave, and noiselessly the river of life broadens, deepens, lengthens, rises silently to our ankles, to our knees, to our necks, flows over our heads, and hurries more and more, while we regard it not, its rapid waters, eager to sweep us on to the great eternal deeps.

Prayer too is an angel — an angel whose wing is strong as an eagle’s, though it be as the wings of a dove, which is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold; an angel who “moves the arms of Him who moves the world;” an angel who can even turn “pollution into purity, sinners into penitents, and penitents into saints.” . . .

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There is one angel with whom we must wrestle, whether we will or no, and whose power of curse or blessing we cannot alter — even the Angel of Death. We know not when he cometh, but as surely as the leaves of the forest, which last spring you saw so young and green, in the rain of golden sunshine are now fading and falling around us, and being trodden down into the

dishonoured dust — so surely the generations of men are passing, so surely shall each of us be carried among mourners to our last long home, outstretched in the cold fixity of death.

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“Thou art not far from the kingdom of Heaven” — The doors of Paradise are open near you; you may breathe snatches of its odours; you may catch echoes of its melodies; you may feel, at times, the sweetness of its angel presences, the hovering of its angel wings.

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To those angels who behold the face of our heavenly Father, the first base word spoken without a blush,— the first oath that profaned unwonted lips, the first lie dictated by cowardice to screen delinquency, the first duty wilfully neglected, the first wicked thought consciously harboured, and rolled like a sweet morsel under the tongue, — the first tear called on a mother’s cheek, the first pang caused to a father’s heart, — the first desire to taste of the tree of the mystery of evil, and to be as gods, and to whisper to the soul, “Thou shalt not surely die” — the first wilful act whereby the erring soul defies its knowledge of that which is true and right, and lifts as it were the banner in the armies of the enemies of God, — these, these are the deeds which the holy ones chronicle in their tablets of sorrow; — and these — far more than the storm, and deluge, and ruin of the groaning and travailing creation, these far more than the ravage of the pestilence, or the carnage of the fight, force from them — “such tears as angels shed.”

## FRAGMENTS.

I believe one follows a genuine instinct in *determining* not to look at the spots, however wide or dark they are upon the sun.

Your heart is nobler than your acts; your nature truer than your conduct; and *that is* and will be your punishment.

Why should we sigh at the merciful provision, which causes that the very best of us, when we die, leaves but a slight and transient ripple on the waters, which a moment after flow on as smoothly as before?

Labour for God is the best cure for sorrow, and the best occupation of life.

Death is but death, and, if we live faithfully, death is our richest birthright.

Amelioration of man's miseries is a great, and noble, and Christlike work.

Man is far too mean a creature to be justified in withholding forgiveness for any personal wrong. It is far more hard to forgive one's self, when one has done wrong.

A change of surroundings involves no change of inward disposition.

It is only the best men who know how to live alone if need be.

None are so precipitate in the career of sin and folly as backsliders.

Our Lord saw deep — “My disciple must be mine in heart and soul, or he is no disciple at all” — the question is not of doing, but of *being*.

We all live on far lower levels of vitality and of joy than we need do. We linger in the misty and oppressive valleys when we might be climbing the sunlit hills.

God puts into our hands the Book of Life, bright on every page with open secrets, and we suffer it to drop out of our hands unread.

“No man for himself, every man for all” expresses the very ideal of a Christian society.

Would the story of the Prodigal have touched, — as it *has* touched the heart of the world, if it were rare?

The more we trust God the more we shall hope in Him.

Truth is many-sided. It was doubtless for this reason that in the Old and New Testaments God has revealed Himself in many ways, and many fragments.

Though we be in the world we need not be of it. A diamond may fall even into the mire, but it will be a diamond still.

In Christ alone — only by faith in Him — does salvation come.

Our duty lies, not in regret ; not in resolutions ; but in thoughts followed by resolves, and resolves carried out in action.

Nothing less than the Majesty of God and the powers of the world to come can sustain the sanctity of our homes, the serenity of our minds, and the patience of our hearts.

Little details can only be regulated by great principles.

Kind words, and liberal estimates, and generous acknowledgment, and ready appreciation and unselfish delight in the excellences of others — these are the truest signs of a large intellect and a noble spirit.

Warm feelings though happy are not religion, and high hopes, though inspiring, are not holiness, and religious excitement, though awakening, is not strength.

Pre-occupy your heart with good, pre-occupy your time with industry and you are safe. . . . When the air is filled with sunlight there is no opportunity for the deeds of darkness.

He whose eyes are for ever on the dust cannot see the stars.

All true wisdom is in its essence Divine wisdom.

Sobriety is the girdle of all innocent enjoyment, and the amethyst which can alone preserve you from excess.

Divine mercy is stronger and wider and more infinite, and more eternal than human sin.

We cannot but love a man whose absolute sincerity enables us to feel the very beatings of his heart.

Put duty always before pleasure. Never invert this order; never let pleasure interfere with the times of duty; never let pleasure usurp the place of duty; never let pleasure infringe on the domain of duty.

Try not to carry ambition into religion.

The only enemy that has power to hurt us is ourselves.

Error in itself is not fatal to the inner sense of right.

If a man shuts his eyes hard we cannot make him see the sun.

If we desire Heaven we must seek it here — if we love Heaven we must love it now.

There is a grandeur and sublimity in the thought of all human souls as one by one they have passed away and been taken to the mercy of the Merciful.

We do all have peaceful periods of our lives; quiet intervals at least between storm and storm; interspaces of sunlight between the breadths of gloom.

The eye can only see what it brings with it the power of seeing.

The capability of unbending . . . . the genuine cheerfulness which enters at due times, into simple amusements, has been found not rarely in the highest and purest minds.

He who would help others, must not only show the way, but lead the way.

Whether our trial comes in the form of wealth or of poverty it becomes a beatitude if it works in us the spirit of patient endurance.

Undazzled by the glamour of prosperity, he was unshaken by the blow of adversity.

The worst evils of our lives are often in anticipation only, and of our own making, not of God's.

Happily the thoughts and hearts of men are often far gentler and nobler than the formula of their creeds; and custom and tradition prevent even the greatest from facing the full meaning of the words they use.

All our lives are in some sense a "might have been," the very best of us must feel, I suppose, in sad and thoughtful moments, that he might have been transcendently nobler and greater, and loftier than he is; but while life lasts, every "might have been" should lead, not to vain regret, but to manly resolutions, it should be but the dark background to a "may be" and a "will be" yet.

I know that God hates sin, because He loves the soul which it destroys.

It is those who do try to be God's children who most realize their exceeding sinfulness.

The virtue which has no better basis than fear of Hell is no virtue at all.

Hell is a temper not a place.

The olive leaf is bitter, but it is a sign of peace. . . . However much the deluge may welter round us, that Holy Heavenly Dove of Peace — is ready to descend into our hearts and rest therein. And if the plucked leaf, which she bears to us from God in Heaven, seems bitter to us, yet none the less is it a leaf of The Tree of Life — a green leaf from that tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Many a man who would have otherwise died unknown, has revealed to others his inherent greatness on being intrusted with authority.

To the true Christian *every* school will be the school of Christ. On the ample leaf of knowledge, whether it be rich with the secrets of nature or with the spoils of time, he will read no name save the name of God. The great stone pages of the world will have it carved upon them legibly, as on the granite tablets of Sinai, and stars will sing of it in their courses, and winds blow, and waters roll.



Truth can always be distorted by headstrong partisans.

Hope the helmet, Innocence the shield.

The necessity for action and the consolation of others, are God's blessed remedies to lull, during the first intolerable moments the poignancy of bereavement.

How different our smaller trials look when they are seen from the distance of a quiet and refreshful rest.

Be brave, and honest, and pure, and God will be with you.

A reproof is intolerable when it is administered out of pride or hatred, but the wounds of a friend are better at all times than the precious balms of an enemy that break the heart.

It is matter of daily experience that the amount of reasoning which ought to be sufficient to produce immediate action is often insufficient to produce even a languid assent.

God always chooses His own fitting instruments. In the decision of momentous questions, rectitude of heart is a far surer guarantee of wisdom than power of intellect.

The great purpose of life — Sympathy, and love to further man's interest, faith and prayer to live ever for God's glory.

Avoid the beginnings of evil — this is *the* way of escape.

“To know God” is not merely to know that He is. In St. John’s sense it is to have full knowledge of Him — that is, to receive Him into the heart. And thus to know Him, is to walk in the light, which we cannot be doing, if we are not keeping His commandments.

True wisdom, true understanding is shown by a course of life spent in meekness, which is the attribute of wisdom.

All service is fruitless if it does not lead a man to refrain from bitter words.

To see God’s face is to be pure from every shame. And it is to be elevated above all earthliness.

Few of us are proficient in the unselfishness which can respect the opinion of an opponent, and the candour which can admit that not one of us has a monopoly of truth ; since few of us display the love which can forgive even a difference of opinion.

The lives of most men throw a marvellous light on their writings, and there are some whose writings cannot even be understood at all without some knowledge of their career and of their times.

Pharisaism and Infidelity are the twin children of every form of theology which obscures the tenderness of revelation and belies the love of God.

Paul was a man who cherished no illusions. He had studied too deeply the books of Scripture and the book of *experience* to be ignorant of the manner in which God deals with His saints.

The test of sincerity is fruitfulness.

It is not for the sake of the calyx, but for the sake of the corolla, that we cultivate the flower, and the calyx may drop away when the flower is fully blown. To cling to the shadow when it has been superseded by the substance is to reverse the order of God.

Unity is not a dead level of uniformity. Each has his separate measure of Grace given by Him who, ascending in triumph, with Sin and Death bound to His chariot-wheels, gave gifts for men.

He knew that the loftiest principles were the necessary basis of the simplest acts of faithfulness, and that all which is most pure, lovely, and of good report, in the Christian life, is the sole result of all that is most sublime in the Christian's faith.

Small injustices are but the wet and slippery stepping-stones down into deeper water.

Ideally, the Christian is absolutely one with Christ, and dead to sin; in reality, as again and again St. Paul implies even of himself, his life is a warfare in which there is no discharge. There is an Adam and a Christ in each of us. "The angel has us by the hand, and the serpent by the heart."

The superficiality which judges only by externals always brings its own retribution. It adores the mortal and scorns the divinity; it welcomes the impostor and turns the angel from its door: It pours its judgment on trivial accidents, and ignores eternal realities.

There would be no chance of religious sincerity or of spiritual progress, if we were never to enter a protest against the tyranny of human error when it encroaches upon the domain of faith and teaches for doctrine the mistakes and traditions of men.

All the world's amelioration has come from entering more deeply into the heart of Christ.

Slander, like some vile adder, has nestled in the dry leaves of fallen and withered hearts, since the world began.

Enlightened by the Spirit of God, St. Paul was in possession of that insight which sees at once into the heart of every moral difficulty.

It is not in a day that the habits of a life can be thrown aside.

With Christianity awoke conscience.

It is the lofty tower that falls with the heaviest crash; it is the stately soul that suffers the deepest abasement; it is the white scutcheon on which the dark stain seems to wear its darkest hue.

Do not let us fancy that our work must cease with our lives. Not so ; far rather must we believe that it will continue for ever. Seeing that we are all partakers of God's unspeakable blessing, the common mystery of immortality.

If life be a battle-field, then, like other battle-fields it is won by the nameless multitudes, by the unrecorded hosts.

Our duty to ourselves, our duty to our own souls is best summed up in our duty to God, and our duty to our fellow men.

How many a life has been kept humble, and happy, and pure, and sweet, by the living realization of that one truth "Thou, God, seest me."

The golden keys of sincerity and prayer.

Results are not in our hands, efforts are, and what God requires of all of us is effort, not result.

If you have seen God's face you can be peaceful and hopeful, if not happy.

We are weak and may be defeated, nevertheless God's foundation-stone stands sure.

Christ bids us live for others, not for ourselves.

Golden threads there are in the saddest life, but it is not of golden threads that the woof of any life is woven.

The insignificance of our worldly work effects in no wise our membership of the spiritual aristocracy.

Be an act ever so unimportant, the principle in our acts is not unimportant.

The tree will fall to south or north as God wills ; simply do thou thy work. Be kind to all and leave the result to God. We are to be kind and good whatever comes of it, remembering that we are not responsible for events beyond our control.

As you cannot be true to one another without being true to yourselves, so neither can you be true to yourselves if you are not true to God.

Moral growth, almost of necessity, involves intellectual growth.

Peace, alas ! comes not to most men but by struggle ; and only through bitter experience of evil is learnt the ennobling, absorbing lesson that good is best.

Your thoughts are the invisible influences which give its complexion to your life, even as the insect is coloured by the leaf on which it feeds.

The memory of man is the book of God. And its records, though they appear to be in many places obliterated, are in reality indestructible.

The hand of Jesus was not polluted by touching the leper's body, but the leper's whole body was cleansed by the touch of that Holy Hand.

Evil thoughts — like one tiny rill of evil, and then, the burst of that black overwhelming torrent !

You are not bidden to the martyr's agony or to the hermit's cell ; you are bidden only to live your ordinary lives, to go through the trivial round, the common task, as the servants of Him who looketh down on you from His lofty throne.

Innocent happiness, oh what a world of beatific vision is wrapped up in those two words ; what a heaven on earth they picture and signify.

The life that has never learnt the high law of holiness is a ruined and a wasted life.

All life is an education.

When thou art in the path of duty trust to Christ with perfect confidence.

Innocence, so far from being the foe to true happiness, is her twin sister.

All true beauty is but "the sacrament of goodness."

We must meet with evil, but we need not touch it.

Do for one another all gentle acts of kindly courtesy : above all, wash one another's feet by that best, sweetest, kindest service of all, which is that each should help his friend or his brother to draw daily a little nearer to God — to triumph daily a little more over human temptations and human infirmities.

Physical evil may crush, but moral evil can alone contaminate. From physical evil we *must*, from moral we need not suffer.

Think on the deep spiritual significance of the washing of the feet by Christ, as pointing to our need, all through life, of the daily renewal of daily purifying grace.

However little sins may seem, they always, inevitably, if unrepented of, lead to great ones. Does not every sinner begin with little sins?

Oh! how many men would be Christians if God would make but one exception in their favour, give them one indulgence, forgive them the retention of one bosom sin.

Outward service is valueless without the love of the heart.

The tree is not tested by its green leaves, or by its vernal blossoms, but by its fruit.

It is one thing to be tempted, another thing to fall. A temptation is not a sin.

I love happiness. I believe in happiness. I am sure that God meant us for happiness. I think that we are all the better for happiness.

Out of suffering comes the serious mind; out of salvation, the grateful heart; out of endurance fortitude, out of deliverance faith.



The true education of life — and for all we know it may go on even beyond the grave — is never attained until this awful, eternal difference between right and wrong is fully, finally, personally, practically, irrevocably learned. Alas ! the experience of every day teaches us that the lesson which looks so simple, is in reality terribly difficult.

Life is not mere living. It is worship — it is the surrender of the soul to God, and the power to see the face of God ; and it is service — it is to feel that when we die, whether praised or blamed, whether appreciated or misinterpreted, whether honoured or ignored, whether wealthy or destitute — we have done something to make the world we came to better and happier — we have tried to cast upon the waters some seeds which, long after we are dead, may still bring forth their flowers of Paradise. The seed dies, but the harvest lives. Sacrifice is always fruitful, and there is nothing fruitful else.

Body — soul — spirit : it is the combination of these three which makes up our mortal nature ; it is the due relations between these three which constitute our sole possible happiness ; it is the right training of these three that is the object of that life-long education which should begin with our earliest years, and end only with the grave.

God only helps those who help themselves. . . .  
Action, effort, perseverance ; these are the touch stones that test the pure gold of sincerity.

He who has known rightly how to use the innocent sunshine while it lasted, knows, at his darkest hour, that the great Sun is still shining, though it be scarfed by earthly vapours or hidden behind the shadow of the world.

Throw a stone into a still lake, and you will see the rings of its ruffled surface widen and widen till they die away upon the farther shore: even so, in the concentric circles of their ever-widening influences, do the lives of every one of you leave their trace in the common life of your companions.

Moral weakness is very nearly akin to active wickedness.

We rarely see ourselves as others see us, or even as we see others. We are so full of self-love that it seems like a miracle of grace when a man frankly, humbly, penitently admits and confesses himself to be in the wrong.

Come now, will the doer at this last of all  
Dare to say I did wrong, rising in his fall.

The true end of knowledge is not curiosity, is not vanity, is not profit, but it is that we may build up others — and that is charity: it is that we may be built up ourselves — and that is wisdom.

No aid, save that which comes from above to every man, can help him to climb the mountain path of life, or enter the wicket-gate of righteousness.

A resolve made in your *own* strength, of what value is it?

Destroy the sins you best love, or they will destroy you. Take thou the Cross: as our fathers smote with sword and battle-axe to free Palestine from Paynim feet, so do you be brave and dauntless in the great crusade for the Holy Land of your soul. Fight, and fight hard; strike, and strike home for God.

The secret of the Lord is with them who fear Him . . . . but for those who fear Him not there is no secret.

We cannot serve man without loving God; our duty to the one must flow from, must be aided by, must be mingled with our duty to the other.

Shall the great housekeeper of the world fodder His cattle and water His flowers, and prune His plants and not feed His children?

The true Christian knows or may know that there is no antithesis, but the deepest sympathy between his divine inner life, and his vigorous outward usefulness; that his work must be most blessed when his heart is most merciful and pure; that his holiest prayers will transform themselves into his happiest labours; and that while he serves God better by giving a cup of cold water in His name to one of His little ones than though he weekly partook of seven fasting but loveless communions, he will still need the cry,

O perfect pattern from above,  
So strengthen us that ne'er  
Prayer keeps us back from works of love,  
Or works of love from prayer.

There is such a thing as a poverty which is rich in every element of noble life.

“Patient continuance in well doing” — there is a grand remedy for idle tears.

Evil thoughts are full of peril, and if all our sins of thought were but written upon our foreheads, there would be dire need for us to stand with bowed heads and downcast eyes as we await the verdict before the solemn bar.

To seek God is to find; and to listen is to hear; and to hear is to know and love.

When God's children pass under the shadow of the Cross of Calvary, they know that through that shadow lies their passage to the Great White Throne. For them Gethsemane is as Paradise. God fills it with sacred presences; its solemn silence is broken by the music of tender promises; its awful darkness softened and brightened by the sunlight of heavenly faces, and the music of angel wings.

When but one vice has betrayed the wicket-gate, a hundred devils rush in and take the fort.

Virtue if it be not as yet righteousness, is yet the sweetest flower which blooms beside the narrow path.

Knowledge is a vain thing only when it is sought out of unworthy motives and applied to selfish ends ! but it becomes noble and glorious when it is desired solely for man's benefit, and consecrated wholly to God's praise.

In the name of Christian light and Christian liberty ; once more in the name of Christ's promised Spirit,—once more in the name of the broadened dawn, and the day-star which has arisen in our hearts ; — I protest against the ignorant tyranny of isolated texts which have ever been the curse of Christian truth, the glory of narrow intellects, and the cause of the worst errors of the worst days of the corrupted Church. Tyranny has engraved texts upon her sword ; Oppression has carved texts upon her fetters ; Cruelty has tied texts around her fagots ; Ignorance has set knowledge at defiance with texts woven on her flag.

There are some things which are in our power, and depend upon ourselves ; other things which are beyond our power, and wholly independent of us. The things which are in our power are our opinions, our aims, our desires, our aversions—in a word, *our actions*. The things beyond our power are bodily accidents, possessions, fame, rank, and whatever lies *beyond* the sphere of our actions. To the former of these classes of things our whole attention must be confined. In that region we may be noble, unperturbed, and free ; in the other we shall be dependent, frustrated, querulous, miserable. Both classes cannot be successfully attended to, they are antagonistic, antipathetic ; we cannot serve God and Mammon.

“Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect” saith the Scripture. But how should we ever hope to imitate God, or attain unto these counsels of perfection, if Jesus Christ had not lived on this earth the life of a perfect man? — If His footsteps had not illuminated the valleys of infancy, and the mountain heights of manhood? He left us an example of sanctity, not a theory of life. He chose for our instruction a quiet, simple, ordinary course. . . . His greatness was not like earthly greatness, but a life of constant and blameless piety, shining to all ages and generations of men for ever, like a serene and steady star.

Lord and Father, great and holy!  
Fearing naught, we come to Thee;  
Fearing naught, though weak and lowly,  
For Thy love has made us free.  
By the blue sky bending o’er us,  
By the green earth’s flowery zone,  
Teach us, Lord, the angel chorus,  
“Thou art Love, and Love alone.”

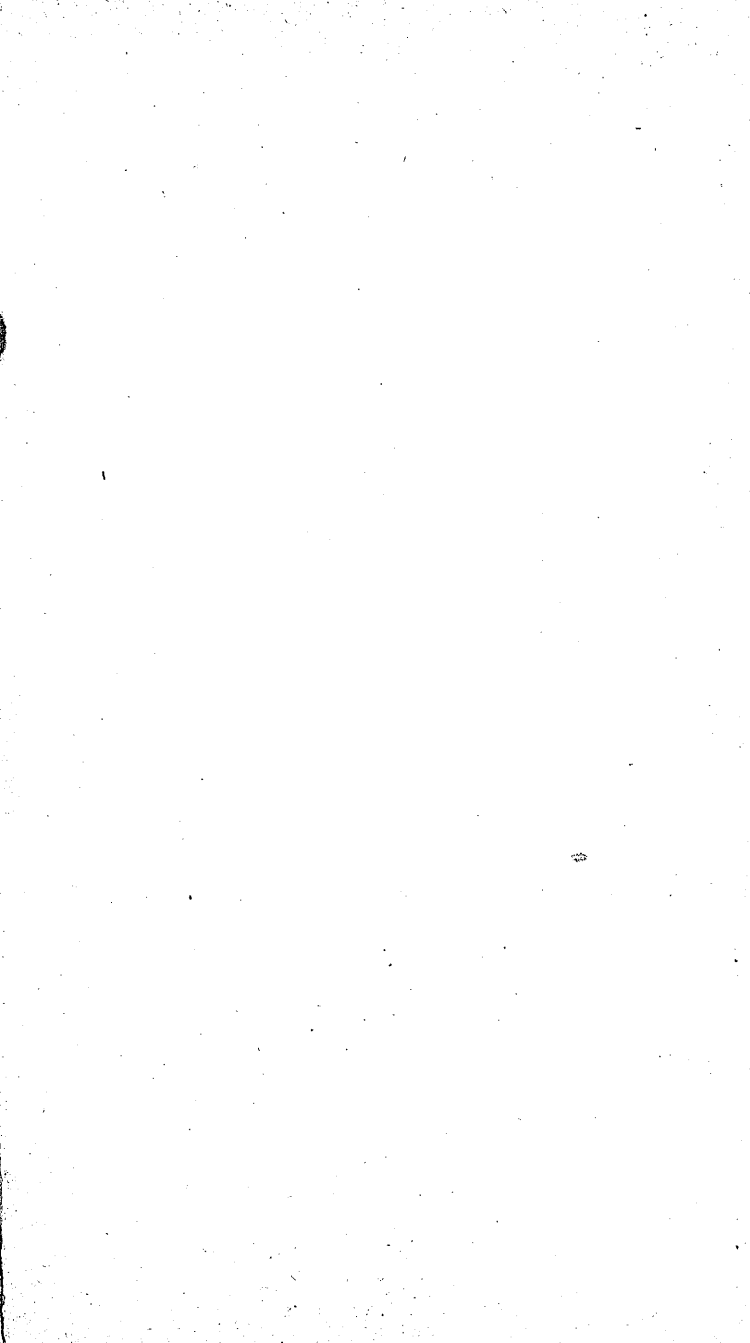
Though the world in flame should perish,  
Suns and stars in ruin fall,  
Trust in Thee our hearts should cherish,  
Thou to us be all in all.  
And though Heavens Thy names are praising,  
Seraphs hymn no sweeter tone  
Than the strain our hearts are raising,  
“Thou art Love, and Love alone.”

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